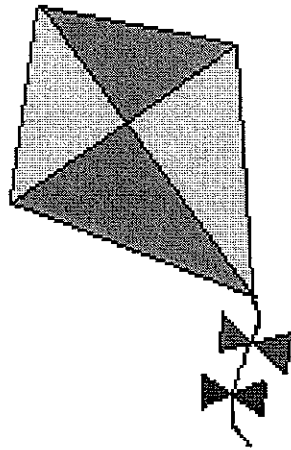


THE KITE RUNNER

By Khaled Hosseini

**Essential Question:
“How can you be good again?”**



Curriculum Guide

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The Kite Runner: Curriculum Guide

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Study Guide Introduction

to the novel

The Kite Runner

by Khaled Hosseini

The Kite Runner is a first novel by San Francisco-based Afghan American writer Khaled Hosseini. It tells the coming-of-age story of Amir, our privileged and talented yet self-loathing and disarmingly candid narrator, as he grows up in Kabul during the last days of King Zahir Shah's rule, then after 1973 is plunged, along with the rest of Afghanistan, into an unrelenting cycle of social revolution, violence, anarchy and fundamentalist religious repression. Amir's family flees the chaos for America's impersonally abundant land of opportunity, but a couple of decades later he is reluctantly drawn back into the maelstrom by his need to redeem a personal and familial betrayal.

When our group sat down to talk over why this novel had recommended itself to us as a good one for students – probably juniors or seniors in high school – to read together, several excellent reasons occurred to us. First among these, we agreed, was the simple fact that Hosseini tells a thumping good tale here. The story keeps you on the edge of your seat; it covers a tumultuous period of upheaval in an area of the world whose relevance to our own well-being has become increasingly obvious since the events of 9/11; presents us with believable characters who, while not always sympathetic, are consistently, painfully, endearingly human; and concludes with a life-affirming message. As a writer, Hosseini demonstrates control of his medium throughout the book and, at times, hits breathtakingly poetic grace notes. He brings up the big issues – the banality of engrained ethnic prejudice; the interplay between individual morality and the health of the larger society and the necessary boundaries between the two; the dynamics of personal betrayal and redemption. In short, there is much here to entertain the reader while providing abundant material for discussion and surmise.

Rahim Khan tells Amir at the outset of the novel, 'There is a way to be good again.' How to become good again; how to rehabilitate oneself after moral failure – for each of us as individuals, or for a troubled society – is the haunting central question addressed in this Study Guide.

As the Table of Contents shows, we have organized this Study Guide into sections corresponding to the requirements any teacher must consider – pre-, during and post-reading activities. One of the virtues of this novel is that it unequivocally places the reader inside the narrator's experience of the Pashtun culture. At the same time, this exotic quality may create barriers to understanding. Pashtunwali – the honor code of the dominant minority group of Afghanistan – may strike many students as strange and difficult to fathom, at first. We have designed the early activities, including several days of Expeditionary Learning and writing prompts, so that students can familiarize themselves with some of the basic facts about Afghanistan's many ethnic groups, history and culture; and so that they can make a personal connection between the story line and their own experiences. The Appendix contains various teacher aids to understanding the novel – including chapter outlines of its content, a schematic character map, glossary of Farsi and Pashtun words, and a timeline of major historical events in this area of the world.

The backbone of the unit is the journaling students will be expected to carry out around specific, assigned motifs and characters as they read the novel. Each week, they will also participate in a Socratic Seminar, organized around key questions that have emerged in the reading over the relevant sections of the book. The End of Unit activities include CIM-appropriate writing and speaking assignments developing the motif journaling into a final work product.

A word of warning. One of the key plot incidents involves the rape of one of the principal male characters; there is also an implied case of child sexual abuse. The rape is not graphically portrayed, although it is recounted with about as much specificity as James Dickey used in Deliverance. In addition, there is some profanity and vulgar language, including one rarely seen slang reference to the female sexual organ on p. 7. The language did not strike us as gratuitous; it records how people actually speak. However, you should be aware of its presence in the novel and prepare your students --or make allowances for their reading around the sections -- accordingly.

Kite Runner by Khaled Hosseini Calendar

| | | | | |
|---|--|---|--|---|
| Day 1 Essential Question: How can you be good again? Narrative Writing | Day 2 <u>KR</u> ch. 1-3(1-23) Building Background | Day 3 <u>KR</u> ch. 4-5(24-47) Building Background | Day 4 <u>KR</u> ch. 6(48-58) Building Background | Day 5 <u>KR</u> ch.7-8(59-100) Motif Tracking |
| Day 6 <u>KR</u> ch. 9-10 (101-124) Map Lesson | Day 7 <u>KR</u> ch. 11-12 (125-165) Preparation for Socratic Seminar | Day 8 Socratic Seminar on Pashtunwali | Day 9 <u>KR</u> ch13(166-189) Acting It Out- Mullah Nasrudin Short Stories | Day 10 Acting It Out- Mullah Nasrudin Short Stories |
| Day 11 <u>KR</u> ch. 14-15 (190-202) Cliché Lesson | Day 12 <u>KR</u> ch. 16-17 (203-223) Courtship Venn Diagram- Preparation for Socratic Seminar | Day 13 <u>KR</u> ch. 18-19 (224-242) Socratic Seminar- Customs | Day 14 <u>KR</u> ch. 20 (243-258) Poetry Lesson | Day 15 <u>KR</u> ch. 21 (259-272) Kite Making |
| Day 16 <u>KR</u> ch. 22 (273-292) Computer Lab/ Library research | Day 17 <u>KR</u> ch. 23 (293-310) Socratic Seminar on 9-11 | Day 18 <u>KR</u> ch. 24 (311-343) Interior Monologue Slot Machine | Day 19 <u>KR</u> ch. 25 (344-372) Interior Monologue Slot Machine continued | Day 20 Silent Discussion |
| Day 21 <hr/> | Day 22 <hr/> | Day 23 Work on novel culminating activities | Day 24 <hr/> | Day 25 <hr/> |

Chapter 1(pages 1-2) December 2001 San Francisco

Amir begins by looking back to the winter of 1975 in Afghanistan after he gets a call from an old family friend, Rahim Khan, who lives in Pakistan.

Chapters 2-9(pages 3-109) Winter 1975-1976 Kabul, Afghanistan

Amir tells of his childhood in Afghanistan. His father is a wealthy businessman, Baba. Amir is constantly seeking his approval. Baba thinks Amir is weak, without courage, unable to stick up for himself.

Hassan is the servant boy who lives with his father, Ali in a mud hut in the garden of Baba's mansion. The boys are one year apart and though Amir hesitates to call Hassan a friend, they are close and do many things together. Hassan does everything for Amir and Amir lets him. Hassan takes the blame for all the mischief that Amir engineers, much the same way that Baba and Ali did when they were children.

Assef and the other neighbor boys constantly persecute Amir and Hassan.

To be noticed by his father, Amir enters the local kite fighting contest. Hassan is an excellent kite flyer and runner, a person who chases and retrieves the kite after it has gone down. Amir ends up winning the contest, but when he follows Hassan, who has gone to chase the kite, he discovers that Assef and the other boys have Hassan cornered. In order not to lose the precious winning kite and out of fear of the boys, Amir remains quiet, witnessing Assef's rape of Hassan. He runs away before he is discovered.

Because of his kite fighting victory, Amir wins favor with Baba, but his guilt over not exposing Assef and the boys drives him to betray Hassan, and Ali decides he and Hassan should leave the mansion.

Chapter 10(pages 110-124) March 1981 Leaving Kabul

Amir and Baba flee Afghanistan to Pakistan during the Soviet invasion.

Chapter 11-13(pages 125-189) 1980s Fremont, California

Amir and Baba immigrate to the US. In 1983, Baba takes a job at a gas station. At 20 years old, Amir graduates from an American high school, and begins classes in creative writing at a local junior college. The San Jose flea market becomes a weekly event for Baba and Amir. Afghans work an entire section of the market. It is at the flea market that Amir meets Soraya and falls in love. During this time, Baba finds out he has lung cancer. Amir and Soraya decide to marry. A month after they are married, Baba dies. Soraya and Amir try to have a child, but can't.

Chapter 14 (pages 190-194)- June 2001 San Francisco

Amir receives a call from Rahim Kahn, Baba's old friend and business partner. He is very ill and is in Pakistan. He tells Amir he needs to see him.

Chapters 15- 2001(pages 195-202) Peshawar, Pakistan

Rahim Kahn tells Amir about the atrocities of the Taliban. He also tells Amir that he is dying.

Chapter 16 (pages 203-213) late 80s/early 90s Kabul, Afghanistan

Rahim Khan tells Amir what has been going on with Hassan. Rahim Khan went to find Hassan in 1986 to get him to help at Baba's house in Kabul since Rahim Kahn was going back to live there. Hassan tells him that his father, Ali, had died a few years ago, killed by a land mine. Hassan married a woman named Farzana. They decided to move back to Kabul to live at Baba's house with Rahim Kahn. Sanaubar, Hassan's mother, showed up at the mansion one day, weak, with her face cut all over. No one had seen her since 1964. They took her in at the mansion, and she delivered a baby boy to Faranza in 1990. His name was Sohrab.

Chapter 17-18(pages 214-227) Peshwar, Pakistan

Rahim continues his story to Amir by handing him a letter and a picture from Hassan. Rahim Kahn tells Amir that six months after the letter and photo, Hassan and Farzana were shot and killed by the Taliban. Sohrab ended up in an orphanage in Kabul. Rahim wants Amir to go get Sohrab and bring him to Pakistan to a couple that has agreed to adopt him. Amir says he can't go to Kabul but eventually does after Rahim breaks the news that Baba was Hassan's father, too. Amir and Hassan were brothers, and Sohrab is his nephew.

Chapter 19-22(pages 228-292) Kabul, Afghanistan

Amir arrives in Afghanistan surprised to find that he feels like a tourist in his own country. Because he has been away, he is unwelcome in Afghanistan by the Afghans who stayed and suffered through one war after another. Amir is told where to find Sohrab. The Taliban has taken him from the orphanage in Kabul. Amir goes to the place where the Taliban have Sohrab and discovers the man in charge is his old nemesis, Assef. After a brutal fight where Amir is nearly beaten to death, Amir and Sohrab flee Kabul.

Chapter 23(pages 293-372) Peshwar, Pakistan

While Amir recovers in a hospital in Peshawar, Farid tries to find the Americans who were set to adopt Sohrab but has no luck. Rahim Kahn has disappeared to be alone before he dies, but leaves a letter behind for Amir. Amir and Soraya decide to adopt Sohrab but run into many barriers. After promising never to send Sohrab back to an orphanage, Amir thinks he might have to in order to adopt him. He finds out he doesn't, but not before Sohrab tries to kill himself.

Sohrab recovers physically, but not emotionally. He wants his old life back with his mom, dad, grandmother and Rahim Kahn. When he gets to the U.S., he remains silent and disconnected.

Freemont, California

One day at a picnic in celebration of Afghan New Year's, Amir and Sohrab watch kites being flown and Amir and Sohrab get involved. As Amir cuts a kite out of the sky, Sohrab smiles slightly.

The Kite Runner Index to Family Connections

Hazaras

Ali-----Sanaubar
|
Farzana-----Hassan
|
Sohrab

Pashuns

Baba-----Sofia General Taheri----- Jamila Taheri
|
Amir-----Soraya

Rahim Khan

Dear Parent/Guardian,

Date _____

Over the next several weeks the senior class will be reading *The Kite Runner* by Khaled Hosseini and viewing films that support this novel study. The story is a powerful work of fiction, a coming-of-age tale, set in Afghanistan and the United States. The main character, Amir, is a young man of privilege, and the story unfolds as we learn about an incident that happens when he was a boy. This novel raises the big issues – the banality of ethnic prejudice, the interplay between individual morality and the health of the larger society, and the dynamics of personal betrayal and redemption.

It's a beautifully written and riveting story – one we think students will enjoy and learn a great deal from. However, the novel does deal with complex and serious issues. A key scene, critical to the plot, involves the rape of one of the principal characters. Students may choose to skip this scene if they wish. In addition, there is some profanity. We also have some documentaries that have graphic footage of an Afghan man and woman being executed by the Taliban.

We feel this novel study/unit has much to offer. Many of the issues are all too human and universal; we all have personal stories about how childhood choices affect our adult lives. The character studies alone would be a worthwhile endeavor. However, if you would prefer your child not read this novel, please sign below. We will do our best to come up with a comparable alternative.

Sincerely,

(Teacher's Signature)

(Subject)

(Date)

Please provide a comparable novel for my student, _____,
to read instead of **The Kite Runner**.

(Signature of Parent/Guardian)

(Phone/email contact info)

Pre-Reading Narrative

“Whenever evil wins, it is only by default: by the moral failure of those who evade the fact that there can be no compromise on basic principles.” Ayn Rand

“All that is needed for the forces of evil to triumph is for enough good men to do nothing.” Edmund Burke

Rationale

This activity serves as an anticipatory set exercise to focus student reading of the novel The Kite Runner. Close relationships often define who we are as a person. Our family and friends are often the only people we can count on during hard times or to help us make difficult decisions. This is the basis of the trust, support and love that we all need to surround ourselves with. But there are times in all of our lives when we make choices that can hurt those closest to us by either action or omission of action. These moral success and failures stay with us through memories and may end up haunting us.

Procedure

Brainstorm a list of your own personal “basic principles”, values, or rules to live by. Next, think of a time in your life when you either did, or intentionally, did not follow your “basic principles”. Did you betray a trust or not stand up for what was right? Did you take a risk and “do the right thing”? How did this incident affect you and your friend or family member? Were there any lasting affects of the decision? Did your relationship change with that person? Have you tried to make up for a former wrongdoing? Use the Chart on the following page to brainstorm your list.

Review your list and decide which incident you want to write about. Try to remember all of the details of the situation; where you were, who was there, what were you doing at the time, was it cold or hot, inside or outside, and any other specific information. Then, write a one or two-page descriptive narrative of what unfolded. Be sure to include any lasting affects to you in particular or to your relationship.

| Incident | Resulting Affects |
|--------------------------------------|--|
| <p>Bill Clinton/ Monica Lewinsky</p> | <p>Hillary had to publicly deal with her husband's betrayal and Bill had to mend his marital relationship,</p> |

BACKGROUND “MEHMAN” (PARTY) FOR *THE KITE RUNNER*

Overview: This workshop is designed to help students teach themselves the political and cultural issues that form the background of Khaled Hosseini's novel *The Kite Runner*. Adapted from a similar workshop designed for Expeditionary Learning, this activity is particularly useful in introducing a topic because it fosters curiosity and builds in immediate feedback about learning. Working in small groups, students will slowly construct a graphic organizer in response to a series of photographs and readings distributed by the teacher. The readings begin as “mystery” texts designed to activate background knowledge. Later, the teacher will pass out “provocative” texts, or narratives that encourage students to see the topic from different points of view. Finally, the students will receive “expert” texts that contain more specific information on Afghanistan. Throughout the workshop, students will work together to organize and record new information they are gathering, as well as any questions they have. At the end of the activity, students can post, present and discuss their different graphic organizers.

Grouping: Assign students to groups of four.

Materials needed: For each group, a set of four different colored markers, a piece of chart paper, texts (included in this lesson plan), loose leaf paper.

Time Needed: 80 minutes, minimum

Procedure:

- **Mystery text—First Reading:** Choose **one** photograph or reading selection from Group A and distribute it to each group.
 - Put a transparency of the selection on the overhead, and read any text out loud (remove the title if it gives the topic away).
 - Have the participants write about the selection in their journals. Have them guess what the selection is about. When they are finished, have them draw a line after their thoughts are jotted down (they will be returning to this entry at the end of the unit to add new insights on the mystery text)
 - Assign the students to groups of four and ask them to discuss what they think the selection is about. Let them know that it's okay if they are a little confused at this stage of the activity.
 - Tell the students that they will be creating a graphic organizer (or concept map) of their collective knowledge/understanding and questions about the topic. They will begin the map in response to the mystery text using just one of the colored markers. Make sure they leave room in the organizer for the texts to follow. Collect the markers when they are done so they don't use the same color again.

- **Provocative text:** Choose **one** article from Group B. All participants should read this article.
 - Ask participants to text code the article: N for new information
 - Then the students should add their new knowledge to their web using a different colored pen.
 - Have students record any questions they have about the topic as they read.
 - **Vocabulary Option:** Have students record new words on a "word wall" posted in the classroom.

- **Expert Text:** Pass out a selection of articles from Group C.
 - Again, ask students to text-code the articles for new information.
 - After everyone has read, each participant should share new knowledge on chart paper in yet a different colored marker. Have extra articles, photos or maps on hand for students who finish early.
 - Students should continue to record their questions about the topic.

- **Mystery Text—Second Reading: Read/Show the initial text again.**
 - The students go back to the mystery text again. Ask them to go back to where they had initially written about the selection and then were asked to draw a line. Have them write new insights about the selection under the line.

- **Debrief the experience.**
 - Contrast the first and second reading/showing of the mystery text: What was it like to hear the poem the second time? What made the experience so different?
 - Ask a general question about what the process was like to read successive articles. Did they know much about the topic before? Had they been curious about the topic? What inspired their curiosity?
 - Post the student-created webs in the room. Do a gallery walk, or have students present their webs to each other.

Hint: Collect the markers from students between texts to keep them from using the same color again.

POSSIBLE TEXTS AND PHOTOS FOR *KITE RUNNER* BACKGROUND “MEHMAN” (PARTY)

During the background bash, students will receive three different types of input. Here are some possible choices, along with the Internet addresses where they can be found.

Group A: Mystery Texts

In the first part of the activity, the teacher should distribute “mystery texts,” poems, political cartoons, songs, photographs, or any type of text that is relevant to the topic, but doesn’t give it away. Choose one from this list or find your own.

1. Photograph of the Taliban executing a woman in a stadium.

<http://www.michaeltotten.com/archives/000072.html>

2. A photo of burka-clad Afghani women spinning wool

http://news.nationalgeographic.com/news/2001/10/1009_afghanfacts.html

3. A photo of Afghani children playing in war ruins.

http://news.nationalgeographic.com/news/2001/10/1009_afghanfacts.html

4. Afghani boy playing with father’s AK-47

http://news.nationalgeographic.com/news/2001/10/1009_afghanfacts.html

5. Taliban troops on a tank

http://news.nationalgeographic.com/news/2001/10/1009_afghanfacts.html

6. Photograph of Afghani boy carrying a kite and a gun

<http://subvision.net/sky/planetkite/sub/afghanistan/index.htm>

Group B: Provocative Texts

This text needs to be interesting and, if possible, a rich narrative that offers multiple perspectives. Again, choose one from the list below.

7. “Afghanistan...” by Zaheda Ghani

A very short narrative describing the author’s experiences during the war with the Soviet Union

<http://www.afghanmagazine.com/april98/arts/shortstories/afghan.html>

8. “From Behind the Veil”, a short story by Dhu’l Nun Ayyoub

9. "For the Women of Afghanistan", a poem by Sheema Kalbasi
This poem describes the plight of Afghani women living under Taliban rule.

<http://www.art-arena.com/kalbasi3.htm>

10. "The Secret Kite", a short story by Deborah Ellis
Although not written by an Afghani, this very short story would be a very appropriate background piece to get students ready to read *The Kite Runner*.

http://www.ferryhillpc.org.uk/summer2002_afghankite.htm

Group C: Expert Texts

Use a variety of formats or media here (e.g., timelines, photos, short biographies, editorial cartoons, letters to the editor, narratives, songs, portions of a novel). Hand out a different article to each member of a group.

11. Timeline of Afghanistan from 1919-2001
<http://www.afghanmagazine.com/afghanhistory/afghistorytimeline.pdf>

12. A brief history of Afghani geography, government, and history
<http://www.infoplease.com/ipa/A0107264.html>

13. Map of Afghanistan, including location of major ethnic groups

14. Descriptions of ethnic groups in Afghanistan
Attach group handout from role-play.

15. Basic obligations and prohibitions of Islam

16. "An Afghan-American Speaks" an editorial by Tamim Ansary

An excellent editorial written in the aftermath of 9/11. The author pleads with his American audience not to confuse the Taliban with Afghanistan. Contains a good summary of recent history.

<http://dir.salon.com/news/feature/2001/09/14/afghanistan/index.html>

17. "Afghanistan: The Route To Riches"

http://www.rethinkingschools.org/special_reports/sept11/16_02/rich162.shtml

18. "Backyard Terrorism"

http://www.rethinkingschools.org/special_reports/sept11/16_02/yard162.shtml

19. "The Plight of Afghan Woman"

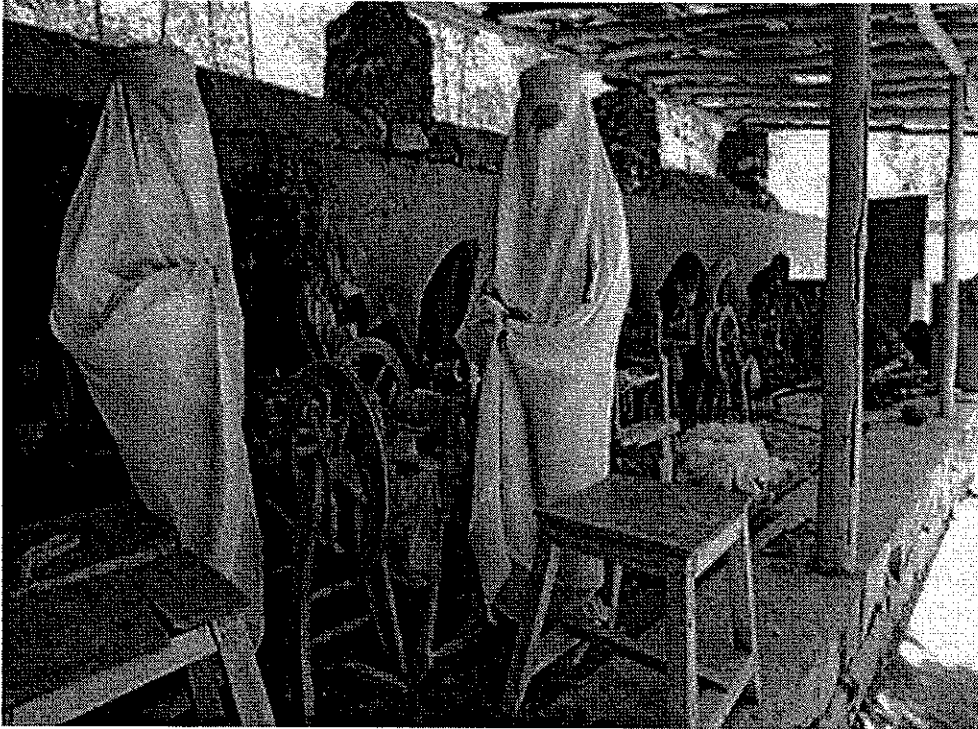
<http://www.afghan-web.com/woman/>

1.



What is happening here and why?

2.



Why are these women dressed this way?

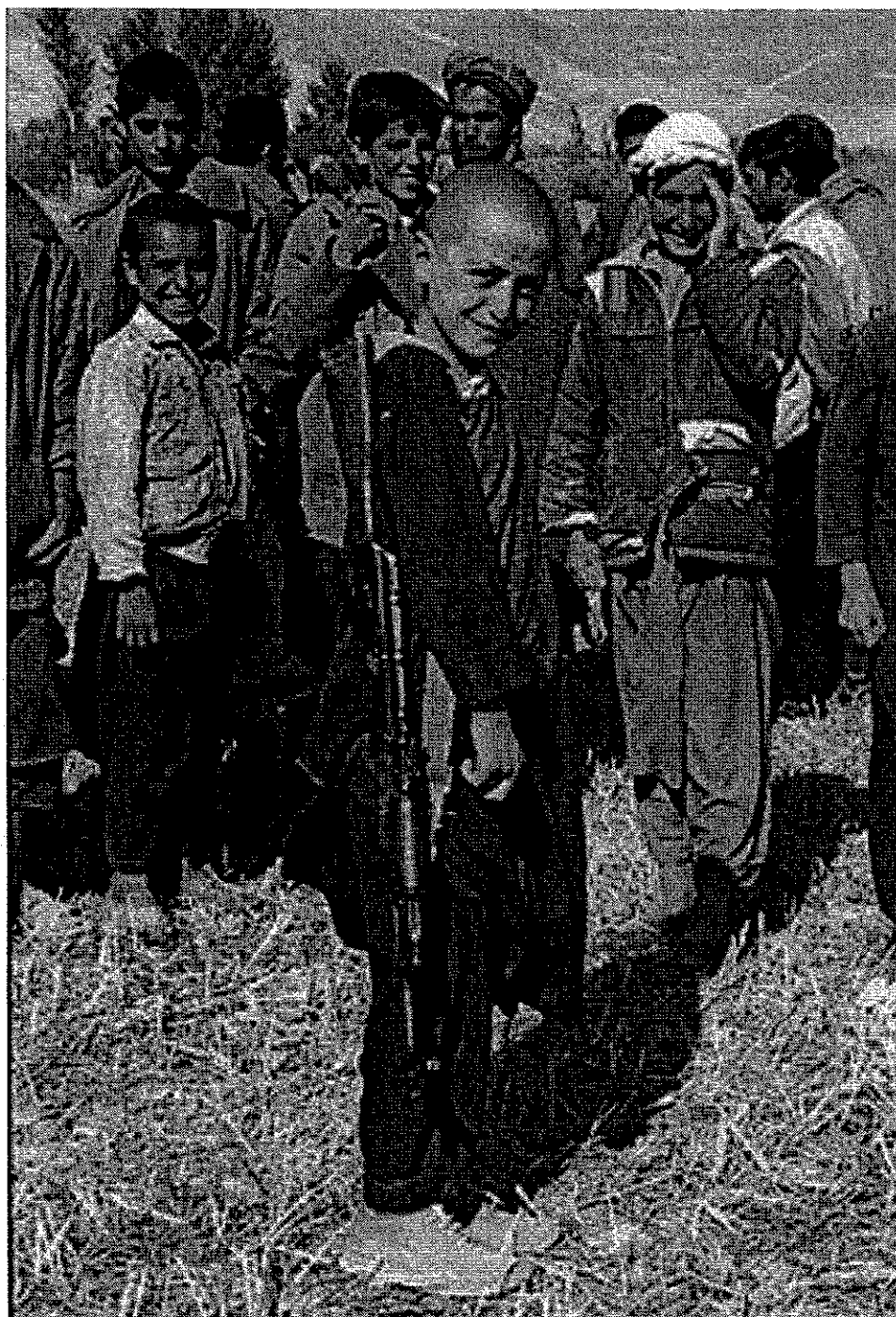
What country do you think this is?

3.



How are these children's lives different from yours?

4.



Why is this boy carrying a gun?

5.



Who are these people?

What are they doing?

6.



Look carefully at what this boy is carrying. Then record your thoughts and feeling about this picture. What kind of world does he live in?

7.

Name _____ Date _____ Period _____

Read the following selection. As you are reading, record your thoughts and questions on the right hand side of the page. Circle any words you don't know.

Afghanistan...

Record your thoughts and questions here.

By Zaheda Ghani
April-June 1998
Lemar-Aftaab

Paper is falling out of the sky. I am in the garden, it's a sunny day. It comes back to me, it is in slow motion. I'm three years old. My father is often amazed at the fact that I should remember this far back into my childhood. I tell him these are unforgettable memories.

The paper continues to fall; communist propaganda literally rains down on us. The helicopters are so noisy, so high up in the sky. I stand looking up, my arms are wide open, I want to catch all the pieces of falling paper: "paper, paper, everywhere"

At least it's better then when they decide to shower us with bullets.

Mother is at school. She is a teacher at the school across the street. You can see the school when you go outside the huge walls of my grandparent's property. The walls, made of thick hay and mud, I remember the walls. The height of them makes me feel protected, I always try to imagine these walls to be strong enough to stop the rockets. They never would.

I go inside the house to play behind the big black couch in the main guestroom. That's where we hide when the sirens sound in the middle of the night. One night I hear my father pray for us to die together if we are hit. That night he holds mother and I close to him. I can feel him shivering as I secretly agree with him. I've never seen father frightened before.

Now I play with my big red doll when it happens. I hear a loud noise, I know it is a bomb. I run out into the garden. Somehow I find my hand in my aunt's hand, I am being pulled behind her. Small feet trying to catch up. Everyone gathers outside. smoke rises from the direction of the

school; I see it come over the wall. The noise numbs my ears, there is screaming and shouting on the other side, where mother is.

We run out of the gates, into the street, though I am hesitant, as I don't want to see her pieces lying before me. She would have been coming home for lunch now.

All I see is smoke. My heart has stopped, my knees shake, I know she's gone. Everyone is crying. My grandmother holds me, my head at her chest, I watch the smoke. I don't say a word. I want her to walk out of the smoke. That's all I want.

I break free of my grandmother, I stand alone, but I do not cry. After that I don't remember what happens. What I do recall is my mother, running out of the smoke. She runs towards me. I'm in her arms. I can smell her, she smells of mother. She holds me tight. She cries as she whispers "we have to get away from here."

My mouth is dry.

From Behind the Veil

THE STREET, although wide, was inconveniently full of strollers passing to and fro. The situation was not helped by the sleek swift cars, which sped by from time to time. They carried wealthy occupants, young women and ladies, who, protected from the curiosity of the outside world, displayed radiant faces. Their shining gaze roved across the street, smiling or frowning as they took in sights which pleased or displeased them.

Among the surging crowd was an amazing mixture of different clothes and contrasting shapes, which, if nothing else, serve to emphasize the varying tastes of these passers-by.

A European who had never been to the East before might be excused for thinking that its people were in the middle of a great festival. As time goes by, however, he is moved to say in amazement, "What long carnival celebrations you have in this country!" Our Western friend would think that people wear these amazing clothes for a festival, just as they would do in his own country.

You can also see women in the crowd, both veiled and unveiled. A man can be surprised to find himself turning involuntarily towards those figures, wearing long silk gowns, which give them such an enticing and alluring shape, and make the observer yearn to uncover the magic and the secrets which lie beneath them.

His desire is only increased when his gaze falls on the filmy veil. Behind it he can catch a fleeting glimpse of fine

Here is a place to write your thoughts and questions as you read. Circle any words that you don't know.

Here is a place to write your thoughts and questions as you read. Circle any words that you don't know.

features and pencilled eyebrows, which serve to inflame the fires of his heart. It makes him want to devote the rest of his life to the exploration of this world full of shame-faced beauty.

Ihsan was one of those who would stroll along with the crowd displaying his smart and tasteful suit over his slim figure, patting his dark gleaming hair whenever he felt that the evening breezes had ruffled it, or spread a curl over his clear forehead.

This Ihsan was a young man of eighteen, good-looking with fine features which made him attractive to a number of women. Naturally he was aware of his appeal and attraction, and he had the youthful capacity to exploit it. That's why you can see him now, with his eyes wandering in search of a quarry.

Ihsan was not interested in chasing unveiled girls. They exuded poise, which he found unattractive, and they were always looking anxiously to avoid criticism so they never looked the passers-by directly in the face. They would walk by without turning their heads, paying no attention to the expressions of flattery which came their way from the gallants, who, after getting as much out of them as a dog gets out of barking at clouds, would give them no further attention.

This is the reason that makes Ihsan always side up to the girls with the long cloaks and the secret little movements which attract him: the burning sighs and the gentle laughter and the concealed glances.

Siham had gone out on the evening of that day as usual to take the air and stroll through the streets. This evening stroll had become a part of her life to such an extent that it was now indispensable. She couldn't remember exactly the date when she first set out to saunter through the street, and did not really know the reason why she kept up her evening appointments. If she did, she did not admit it. Whatever the case, no sooner had Siham seen the bustle in the middle of the street than she headed for the pavement. She looked cautiously left and right until she saw Ihsan in the distance, and suddenly she felt the blood coursing through her veins.

She found herself unconsciously moving towards him until she was almost parallel with him, saw him staring at her from top to bottom, and felt a tremor throughout her body. When she saw his burning stare almost penetrating the cloak which covered her slender body her heart beat violently. She was used to seeing him every day at this time, and she used to stare at him freely each time until she had memorized his face. Of late, she had begun to feel her heart pounding whenever she saw him, and her face flushed with confusion. There was nothing to stop her from feasting her eyes on him, however, because she knew that the veil covered her face and concealed the overwhelming attraction she felt for him.

We cannot be certain what it was that made this youth know that the girl was interested in him, and whether his first overture to her came in the course of one of his habitual overtures, which he made to any girl. Whatever it was, he went up to the girl boldly on that first day, and sidled up to her, greeted her, and saw her turning round to look at him cautiously before hurrying on her way.

He knew immediately that she was not angry with him, and emboldened, he carried on behind her and saw her going into one of the public parks. She knew that he was following her, and hastened on her way, trembling with conflicting emotions of joy, fear, and caution.

He followed her into the park for a short distance, until he saw her sitting on her own, behind a big tree. He went up to her and spoke to her smilingly.

"Good evening."

"Good evening," she replied shyly.

Then she raised her veil from her brown face and her dark eyes, and Ihsan was captivated by the long dark eyelashes which cast a shadow over her features.

The features of her face were fine, and inspired the beholder with the strongest feelings of awe and worship. She was fearful and breathless, turning from side to side like a timid gazelle. She knew that what she was doing amounted to an unpardonable crime, but drew comfort from one thing—the knowledge that this boy had not seen

Here is a place to write your thoughts and questions as you read. Circle any words that you don't know.

her before and did not know her. She was having an adventure, nothing more, and she was drawn into it by her youth and by the warm blood which coursed in her veins.

The boy's mind worked on some expressions of flattery and endearment. For his opening shot, he ventured: "I've seen you often, as you've passed by this street and then gone to walk among the trees. I wasn't able to talk to you because I respect you, and your whole appearance tells me that you are from a good family."

She replied, a little resentfully: "But I suppose you always try to talk with ordinary girls as well? Why don't you just chase the common girls, and satisfy your passions on them?"

"I'm sorry, really, I don't mean you any harm. But I'm alone, as you see, and I can't find a companion to share my walks with me. I saw that you were the only girl who found pleasure in these strolls, and so I felt that there was a link between us. Anyway, if you find my presence unpleasant in any way, I'll move off right now."

He made a move to get up, but she checked him and asked: "Do you know who I am?"

"I haven't the least idea, but this doesn't stop me from believing that I share your spirit," he replied softly.

"If you want to accompany me on these innocent walks, I don't see any objection," she mused. "There's no harm in strolling around with you for an hour or so, at intervals which we can agree on, on condition that you promise me that you won't try to follow me and try to find out who I am. I don't want you trying to contact me at any other times."

"I respect your wish and I shall honour it," he replied formally.

The two of them sat side by side on one of the stone benches, and a deep silence reigned over them, in which each felt the beating of their own hearts. This silence continued for a long time. Both of them had been overcome by the novelty of their strange and singular situation.

Ilhan, however, was a youth accustomed to flirtations, although he realized that this time he was faced with a girl

Here is a place to write your thoughts and questions as you read. Circle any words that you don't know.

The meetings went on longer, and the subjects of their conversations diversified. The relationship between them developed, and things became deeply involved. She no longer felt that there was anything strange or unusual about the meetings, but she kept her head, using her lively mind to conceal her relationship with this boy, and to prevent him from trying to find out who she was and getting in touch with her.

ONE DAY SIHAM was sitting with her father, talking to him after supper, while he was scanning the evening paper. His eye fell on a long article about women who had abandoned the veil, and, deciding to have his daughter's view, he read the article out aloud. No sooner had he finished than Siham roundly abused the author for trying to break with convention and introduce modern heresies. Her father felt a greatly increased regard for his intelligent, well-brought-up daughter, who obviously knew the value of traditions and respected them. Such a difference between her and the rest of her irresponsible scandalous friends, who, no sooner had they learned to read and write, went around throwing overboard society's conventions without shame or respect! Impulsively, he moved towards his daughter and kissed her forehead.

"God preserve you as a treasure for your father."

When she reached her room Siham could barely stop herself from laughing out loud. She picked up her veil and danced with glee, then stopped in the middle of the room and began to whisper to the veil: "You black shroud, you know how I despise you and make use of you to keep him apart from me! I don't care about you, and I feel nothing for you. I defy you. But I love you too. These poor girls take refuge behind you in order to preserve their virginity, and their honour, and good morals. If they were more truthful they would say they love you because you hide faults and scandals. I love you because you help me to enjoy my life in a way that only those who wear the veil can appreciate. I pity those wretched unveiled women. I scorn them."

Here is a place to write your thoughts and questions as you read. Circle any words that you don't know.

Here is a place to write your thoughts and questions as you read. Circle any words that you don't know.

who was pure and virtuous. There was something about her, a certain strength of purpose and character, which confused him, and stopped him from going too far. His mind worked to collect his thoughts and to rescue him from the situation into which he had unwittingly walked.

At length, he spoke, somewhat confused.

"What is your name, please?"

"Have you forgotten my condition that you should not try to identify me?"

"Of course. I'm sorry. But surely... in view of our future friendship...?"

"Have you forgotten? We live in a society in which this situation is unforgivable. If my people knew anything of this they'd kill me. While society is like this, we must learn to deceive. We must use the follies of our society in order to break its shackles!"

"What a penetrating mind you have!" said Ihsan admiringly.

"Thank you. Time's getting on and I must be getting back to the house. I will see you again in two days."

As she said goodbye he tried to put his arm around her waist, but she rebuffed him sharply. Then she relented slightly, saying: "I don't know who you are. You might be one of those mean boys who take delight in trapping girls for their own pleasure and sport."

She went back to the house invigorated, but somewhat disturbed, for she had broken with the most binding and serious of traditions in one fell swoop. She didn't understand how it had begun and how it had ended, until it seemed to her that everything that had happened that day was a disturbing dream.

She threw her cloak on one side, and went to help her mother with the housework. She flattered her mother, made herself agreeable, and took delight in carrying out her orders and her arrangements. When her father returned home from work she welcomed him with smiling face, then she went to her room to get on with her studies.

She set about her work mechanically, with nervous high spirits, and had disturbing dreams at night.

9.

Name _____ Date _____ Period _____

Read the following poem. Circle any words you don't know and add them to the word wall later. On the right hand side of the page, record new information and ask any questions you have while reading. Be prepared to add this information to you group's graphic organizer later.

For The Women Of Afghanistan by Sheema Kalbasi

Record your thoughts and questions while reading here.

As I walk in the streets of Kabul,
behind the painted windows,
there are broken hearts, broken women.
If they don't have any male family to accompany them,
they die of hunger while begging for bread,
the once teachers, doctors, professors
are today nothing but walking hungry houses.
Not even tasting the moon,
they carry their bodies around, in the covered coffin veils.
They are the stones in the back of the line ...
their voices not allowed to come out of their dried mouths.
Butterflies flying by, have no color in Afghani women's eyes
for they can't see nothing but blood shaded streets
from behind the colored windows,
and can't smell the bakery's bread

**for their sons' bodies exposing, cover any other smell,
and their ears can't hear anything
for they hear only their hungry bellies
crying their owners' unheard voices
with each sound of shooting and terror.
Remedy for the bitter silenced Amnesty,
the bloodshed of Afghani woman's life
on the-no-limitation-of-sentences-demanding help
as the voices break away not coming out but pressing hard
in the tragic endings of their lives.**

10.

Name _____

The Secret Kite by Deborah Ellis

When the Taliban came to power in Afghanistan they made it illegal for women to work outside the house and girls to go to school. They also outlawed many of the things that help people to enjoy life, like music, books and flying kites.

Here is a space to record your thoughts and questions as you read.



"You're 10 years old," he said. "You are too old to have a kite. You should give it to me. I'm still young. I'm only five."

"I was seven years old when Mother and Father gave the kite to me," I said, more to myself than to Omar. It had been a birthday present. Before I got to fly it, the Taliban came to my city of Mazar-e-Sharif, and we had to hide the kite away.

"Can I have Mustafa's kite?" Omar asked my mother, who was sitting in the brightest spot of our dim, one-room house mending clothes.

"The kite belongs to Mustafa," she said.

"He can do with it what he wishes."

"He can't fly it," Omar said.

"It's against the law to fly a kite," I said, as I had said a million times before. "The Taliban would arrest me."

Omar flicked a fly off his arm. "That's what I'd do to the Taliban," he said.

Here is a space to record your thoughts and questions as you read.

It was all very well for Omar to make brave-sounding statements about the Taliban. He stayed in the house all day with my mother. He never had to see them. Besides, he was too young at the time to remember when the Taliban soldiers first came. He doesn't remember the screams from the neighbours, the killings, the cries in the night, the terrible fear that our door would be the next one they came through.

I flipped the newspaper back down over the beautiful kite, unfolded the corner of the carpet over the newspapers, and pulled the sleeping mat over that. If the police came in, looking for my kite, they'd never find it.

"Give him the kite," my older brother, Ghulam, said. "You'll never fly it."
"One day I will."

"If you're going to dream," Ghulam said, "dream something sensible. Dream that our father has found work for today so we can eat tonight. Dream that my leg will grow back."

Ghulam lost his leg in a minefield. I can't argue with him when he talks about his missing leg, since I still have both of mine.

"I'm going to go to work now," I said to my mother. "Be careful," she said.

"I'm always careful," I said back, then I left.

I work as a secret keeper. People hire me to keep watch while they do things they're not supposed to do, like listen to BBC radio broadcasts, or teach girls to read. Four women hire me now and then to stand guard while they paint their faces and their fingernails and read poetry they've written.

People do their secret things inside their houses, and I stay outside, and keep watch.

Sometimes I worry that one day I'll have become heavy with them.
They will weigh me down and make me old.

Here is a space to record your thoughts and questions as you read.

That afternoon I was guarding some men who were listening to music cassettes. The house they were in, grander than mine, had a high wall around it. To keep watch, I had to climb into the tree that was in the yard. From there, I could see in all directions. If the music men were caught, they'd be arrested and taken to the soccer stadium. The Taliban did things to prisoners in the stadium that grown-ups spoke about in anguished whispers, and went silent about when I was around and listening.

Sitting and watching for hours can be boring unless the police come by to liven things up. Fortunately, I can watch and think at the same time, and what I thought about that day was my little brother. Was he right? Was I getting too old for a kite? Maybe I should give it to him. He couldn't fly it either, but it would make him happy to own it. But I couldn't do it. I couldn't give up my kite without once seeing it fly. I sat in the tree, keeping watch and thinking. Maybe I could find a way to fly it. There must be a way!

I thought about it all afternoon. At first I thought about taking the kite out in the middle of the night, and running back and forth in the street with it a few times, but I knew that wouldn't satisfy me. It would feel like I was ashamed of the kite, and ashamed of myself for flying it.

At the end of the afternoon, the music men came out of the house, their faces closed off as they tried to hold the music in their heads for as long as possible. I was paid in bread, and headed home. I got the idea as I was passing the police station.

The highest point in my neighbourhood is the old radio tower on top of the police station. My kite would look wonderful flying from there. The thought made me cold and tingly,

and I knew that I would have to do it, and that I would have to do it that night. I couldn't give myself time to think about it. If I did, I wouldn't do it, and my kite would be hidden forever.

Here is a space to record your thoughts and questions as you read.

I had to wait a long time that night, but finally, everyone was asleep. Carefully, quietly, I took my kite out of its hiding place, and crept outside. I moved like a shadow, soft and silent. If I could do this, I would be able to do anything — jump over mountains, fly with the birds, sit on the moon and laugh at the sun.

My mind and heart were clear and calm, and I felt no fear. I walked past the sleeping guards, and climbed up the ladder that leaned against the police station wall. The tower on the roof got very narrow toward the top, but my feet did not slip. I tied the kite string to the top of the tower. A breeze gently lifted the kite from my hand, and carried it out the length of the string. My kite was finally flying.

I returned to the police station early the next morning, with Omar. A crowd was there, looking up at my kite, and ignoring the angry yells from the police. The Taliban struggled to get the kite down.

"The kite must be burned!" the police captain decreed. The policeman at the top of the tower cut the kite string to bring my plans. It slipped through the policeman's fingers, and kept flying. It flew all around the police station. It shone green and gold in the morning sun.

"Shoot it down!" the captain ordered, and the Taliban fired their rifles and machine guns into the air to kill my kite. But my kite was smarter than their guns, and their bullets didn't hurt it. My kite caught an upward breeze and flew off.

I stood and watched it with Omar, who laughed as it flew away to a world where

children can play and families can eat and
kites don't have to hide under rugs.

I am like the kite. I am here. I am alive,
and one day, all the thoughts and secrets
that are hidden deep inside of me will burst
out, and I will fly away with them to a
better world.

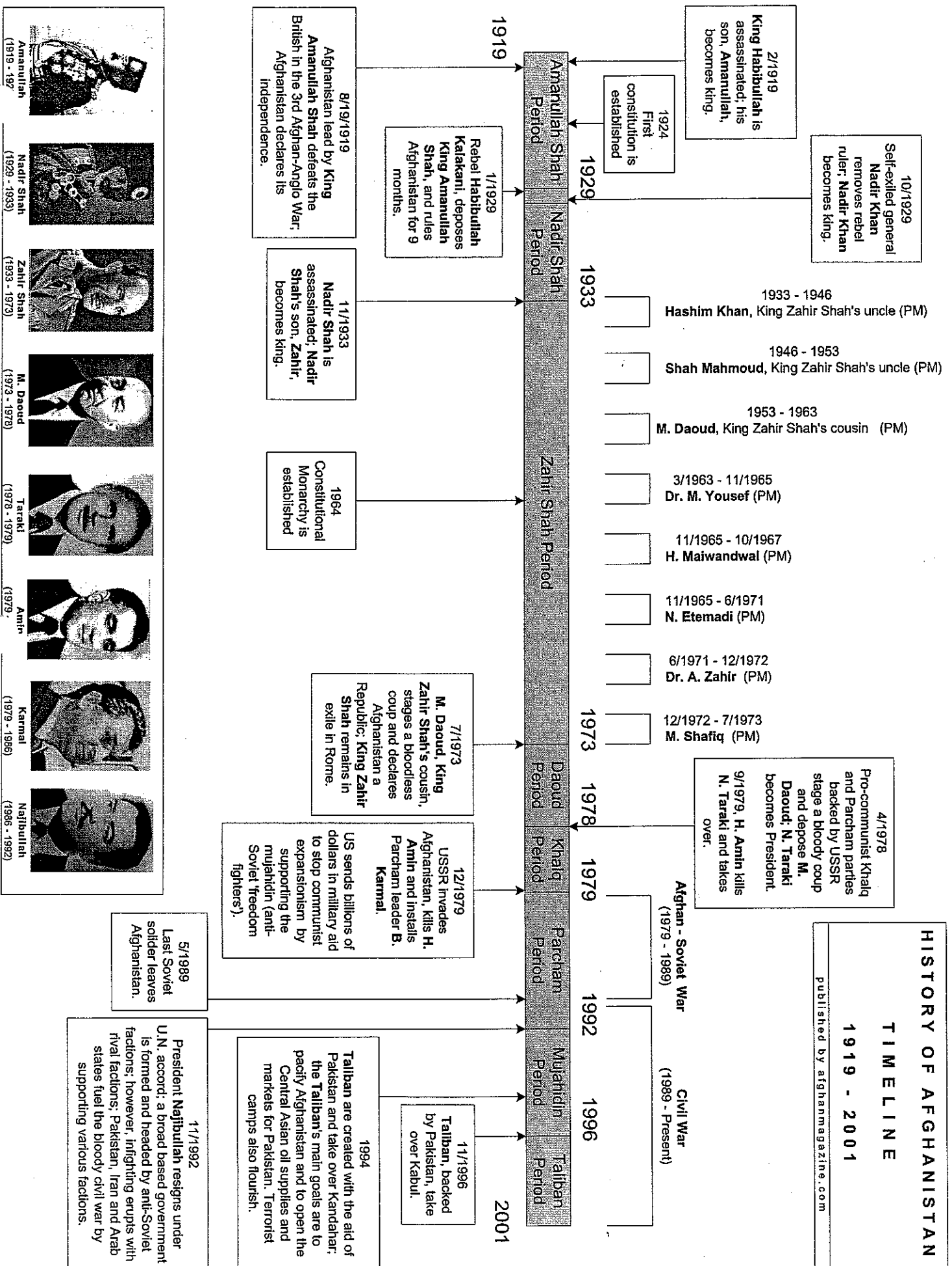
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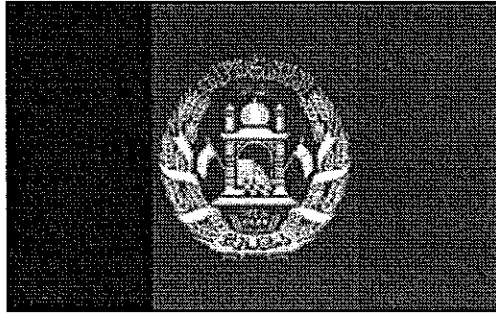
HISTORY OF AFGHANISTAN

TIMELINE

1919 - 2001

published by afganmagazine.com





Geography

Afghanistan, approximately the size of Texas, is bordered on the north by Turkmenistan, Uzbekistan, and Tajikistan, on the extreme northeast by China, on the east and south by Pakistan, and by Iran on the west. The country is split east to west by the Hindu Kush mountain range, rising in the east to heights of 24,000 ft (7,315 m). With the exception of the southwest, most of the country is covered by high snow-capped mountains and is traversed by deep valleys.

Government

In June 2002 a multiparty republic replaced an interim government that had been established in Dec. 2001, following the fall of the Islamic Taliban government.

History

Darius I and Alexander the Great were the first to use Afghanistan as the gateway to India. Islamic conquerors arrived in the 7th century, and Genghis Khan and Tamerlane followed in the 13th and 14th centuries.

In the 19th century, Afghanistan became a battleground in the rivalry between imperial Britain and czarist Russia for control of Central Asia. Three Anglo-Afghan wars (1839–1842, 1878–1880, and 1919) ended inconclusively. In 1893 Britain established an unofficial border, the Durand Line, separating Afghanistan from British India, and London granted full independence in 1919. Emir Amanullah founded an Afghan monarchy in 1926.

During the cold war, King Mohammed Zahir Shah developed close ties with the Soviet Union, accepting extensive economic assistance from Moscow. He was deposed in 1973 by his cousin Mohammed Daoud, who proclaimed a republic. Daoud was killed in a 1978 coup, and Noor Taraki took power, setting up a Marxist regime. He, in turn, was executed in September 1979, and Hafizullah Amin became president. Amin was killed in December 1979, as the Soviets launched a full-scale invasion of Afghanistan and installed Babrak Karmal as president.

The Soviets, and the Soviet-backed Afghan government, were met with fierce popular resistance. Guerrilla forces, calling themselves *mujahideen*, pledged a jihad, or holy war,

to expel the invaders. Initially armed with outdated weapons, the mujahideen became a focus of U.S. cold war strategy against the Soviet Union, and with Pakistan's help, Washington began funneling sophisticated arms to the resistance. Moscow's troops were soon bogged down in a no-win conflict with determined Afghan fighters. In 1986 Karmal resigned, and was replaced by Mohammad Najibullah. In April 1988 the USSR, U.S., Afghanistan, and Pakistan signed accords calling for an end to outside aid to the warring factions. In return, a Soviet withdrawal took place in Feb. 1989, but the pro-Soviet government of President Najibullah was left in the capital, Kabul.

By mid-April 1992 Najibullah was ousted as Islamic rebels advanced on the capital. Almost immediately, the various rebel groups began fighting one another for control. Amid the chaos of competing factions, a group calling itself the Taliban—consisting of Islamic students—seized control of Kabul in Sept. 1996. It imposed harsh fundamentalist laws, including stoning for adultery and severing hands for theft. Women were prohibited from work and school, and they were required to cover themselves from head to foot in public. By fall 1998 the Taliban controlled about 90% of the country and, with its scorched-earth tactics and human rights abuses, had turned itself into an international pariah. Only three countries, Pakistan, Saudi Arabia, and the UAR, recognized the Taliban as Afghanistan's legitimate government.

On Aug. 20, 1998, U.S. cruise missiles struck a terrorist training complex in Afghanistan believed to have been financed by Osama bin Laden, a wealthy Islamic radical sheltered by the Taliban. The U.S. asked for the deportation of Bin Laden, whom they believed was involved in the bombing of the U.S. embassies in Kenya and Tanzania on Aug. 7, 1998. The UN also demanded the Taliban hand over Bin Laden for trial.

In Sept. 2001, legendary guerrilla leader Ahmed Shah Masoud was killed by suicide bombers, a seeming death knell for the anti-Taliban forces, a loosely connected group referred to as the Northern Alliance. Days later, terrorists attacked New York's World Trade Center Towers and the Pentagon, and Bin Laden emerged as the primary suspect in the tragedy.

On Oct. 7, after the Taliban repeatedly and defiantly refused to turn over Bin Laden, the U.S. and its allies began daily air strikes against Afghan military installations and terrorist training camps. Five weeks later, with the help of U.S. air support, the Northern Alliance managed with breathtaking speed to take the key cities of Mazar-i-Sharif and Kabul, the capital. On Dec. 7, the Taliban regime collapsed entirely when its troops fled their last stronghold, Kandahar. However, al-Qaeda members and other mujahideen from various parts of the Islamic world who had earlier fought alongside the Taliban persisted in pockets of fierce resistance, forcing U.S. and allied troops to maintain a presence in Afghanistan. Osama bin Laden and Taliban leader Mullah Muhammad Omar remained at large.

In Dec. 2001, Hamid Karzai, a Pashtun (the dominant ethnic group in the country) and the leader of the powerful 500,000-strong Populzai clan, was named head of Afghanistan's interim government; in June 2002, he formally became president. The U.S. was one of 31 nations contributing peacekeeping forces to the country in 2002 and 2003, but it also maintained 9,000 additional troops to combat the remnants of the Taliban and al-Qaeda. Fighting persisted into 2003, and in March, in the largest operation in more than a year, about 1,000 soldiers raided Kandahar, seeking out al-

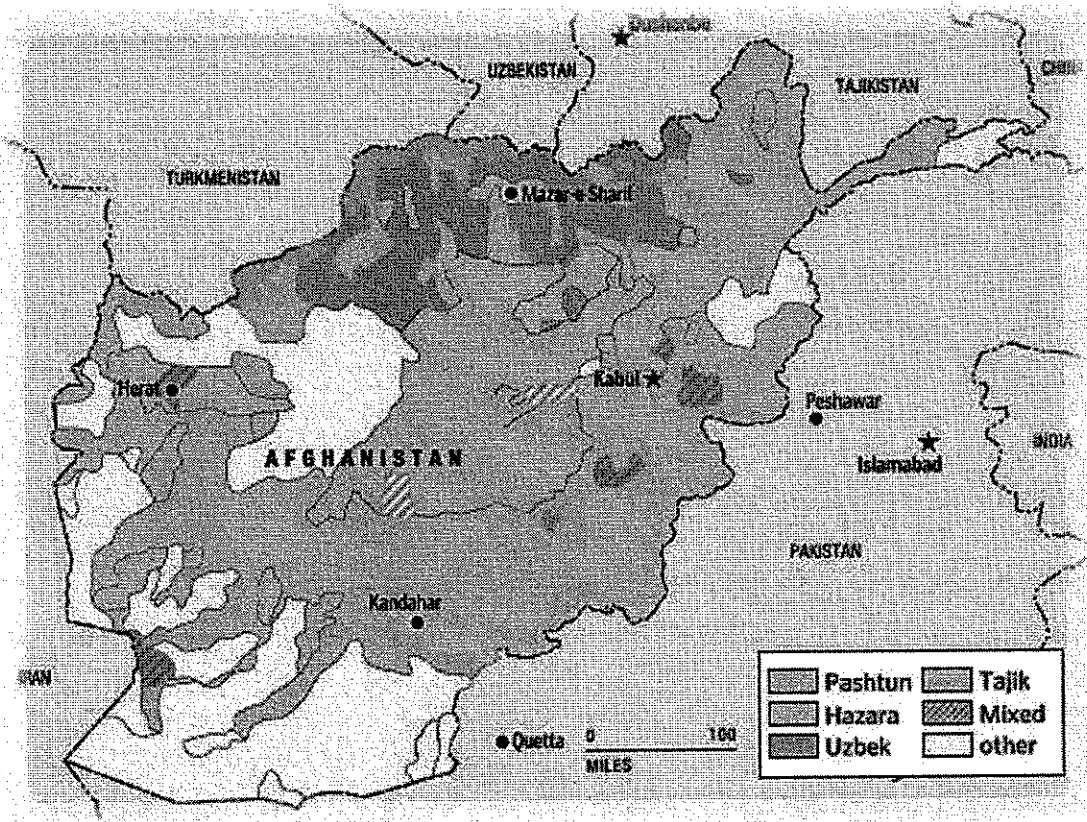
Qaeda members. U.S. Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld declared in May that major combat in Afghanistan had ended, marking the formal transition from military operations to reconstruction. But attacks on American-led forces intensified over the summer, and warlords maintained tight regional control. Indeed, President Karzai had almost no power beyond Kabul. In August, NATO assumed command of the peacekeeping troops (most of whom were German and Canadian), and promised a more effective operation.

Afghanistan's loya jirga, or grand assembly, ratified a new constitution on Jan. 4, 2004. It calls for an Islamic republic, a strong president, and a parliament with upper and lower houses. Low voter registration and the ongoing threat posed by al-Qaeda prompted President Karzai to postpone elections, originally scheduled for June 2004, until September.

In April, the U.S. deployed additional troops to Afghanistan, along the Pakistan border, in an attempt to rout out remaining members of al-Qaeda and the Taliban, who continue to ambush U.S. soldiers and Afghan police. On the other side of the border, Pakistan launched an assault on hundreds of foreign militants holed up along the mountainous South Waziristan region. Pakistani forces killed dozens of fighters and captured several others.

About 50 nations pledged more than \$4.4 billion in grants and loans to Afghanistan. More than half those funds, \$2.3 billion, will come from the United States. The countries also indicated that they planned to give Afghanistan a total of about \$8 billion over the next three years.

13.



What different kinds of people live in Afghanistan?

What other countries border Afghanistan?

Some Ethnic and Political Groups of Afghanistan

Pashtun—The dominant minority group in Afghanistan, the Pashtun are divided into various tribes and clan groups. Pashtuns regard themselves as the true Afghans and are governed by an honor code of proper behavior known as Pashtunwali. Pashtuns are a big, strapping people who look Aryan and, indeed, were regarded by Hitler as the wellspring of the Germanic peoples. They have their own language, Pashtu, which is spoken in the tribal areas of the country. However, most Pashtuns also speak Farsi (Persian). They are Sunni Muslims. Pashtuns are used to ruling the country; for example, King Zahir Shah, who led the country forty years prior to his overthrow in 1983, was Pashtun, as was his cousin, Douad, who engineered his overthrow in a bloodless coup.

Here is a place to write your thoughts and questions as you read. Circle any words you don't know.

Hazara—One of many minority ethnic groups who populate Afghanistan, the Hazaras originally arrived from the central steppes of Asia by horseback in the 13th century. They look Mongolian or somewhat Chinese by appearance. In modern times, the Hazaras occupy the mountainous central region of Afghanistan. In the cities, the Hazara enjoy little social status and work at difficult, low-paying jobs like water carrying, or human waste removal. The Hazaras are Shia'a Muslims and the traditional rivals of the Sunnis.

Tajiks—Sunni Muslims who speak Persian and live predominantly in the

Northeast and West of the country. They make up the bulk of the educated elite in Afghanistan and possess significant political influence. They are the Pashtun's closest rivals for power and prestige.

Here is a place to write your thoughts and questions as you read. Circle any words you don't know.

Taliban—The Taliban are a political group of extreme fundamentalist Muslims who ruled Afghanistan after the final withdrawal of the Russian occupying force in 1989 and ensuing civil war. They want to have society conform their behaviors exactly as prescribed in their interpretation of the Quran. The Taliban were notorious for their oppressive treatment of women, requiring them to wear burqas (a garment that conceals the woman from head to toe) and be accompanied by a male relative when out in public. The Taliban government gave Osama Bin Laden a safe haven in Afghanistan, setting the stage for his terrorist training camps and the attack on the World Trade Center.

Basic Obligations and Prohibitions of Islam

Prohibitions

1. To disrespect one's parents.
2. To commit murder, adultery, or fornication.
3. To take illegal interest in trade.
4. To have sex beyond the limit of marriage.
5. To take God's name in vain.
6. To testify falsely against others.
7. To drink intoxicating liquors.
8. To steal.
9. To lie.
10. To eat pork or other animals not slaughtered according to the dietary rules.
11. To display haughtiness and pride.
12. To be a hypocrite.
13. To use pictures, statues to represent Allah (God).

Obligations

1. Belief in the supremacy of one God.
2. Belief in truthfulness, sinlessness, and all of the prophets; including Abraham, Moses, Jesus, Mohammed.
3. Belief in an eternal life hereafter.
4. Belief in the Day of Judgement.
5. Belief in the justice of God.
6. To obey and follow the laws of God which Muhammad preached.
7. To say daily prayers.
8. To fast during the month of Ramadan.
9. To visit the Kaaba at least once during a lifetime.
10. To pay religious dues.
11. To maintain one's dependents.
12. To provide children with a religious education.
13. To show kindness to one's parents, family members, and neighbors.
14. To find a legal way of making a living.
15. To eat what Islam allows and to clothe oneself according to the religion.

16.
Name _____

An Afghan-American speaks

You can't bomb us back into the Stone Age. We're already there. But you can start a new world war, and that's exactly what Osama bin Laden wants.

By Tamim Ansary

September 14, 2001 | I've been hearing a lot of talk about "bombing Afghanistan back to the Stone Age." Ronn Owens, on San Francisco's KGO Talk Radio, conceded today that this would mean killing innocent people, people who had nothing to do with this atrocity, but "we're at war, we have to accept collateral damage. What else can we do?" Minutes later I heard some TV pundit discussing whether we "have the belly to do what must be done."

And I thought about the issues being raised especially hard because I am from Afghanistan, and even though I've lived in the United States for 35 years I've never lost track of what's going on there. So I want to tell anyone who will listen how it all looks from where I'm standing.

I speak as one who hates the Taliban and Osama bin Laden. There is no doubt in my mind that these people were responsible for the atrocity in New York. I agree that something must be done about those monsters.

But the Taliban and bin Laden are not Afghanistan. They're not even the government of Afghanistan. The Taliban are a cult of ignorant psychotics who took over Afghanistan in 1997. Bin Laden is a political criminal with a plan. When you think Taliban, think Nazis.

Here is a place to record your thoughts and questions as you read.

When you think bin Laden, think Hitler. And when you think "the people of Afghanistan" think "the Jews in the concentration camps." It's not only that the Afghan people had nothing to do with this atrocity. They were the first victims of the perpetrators. They would exult if someone would come in there, take out the Taliban and clear out the rats' nest of international thugs holed up in their country.

Some say, why don't the Afghans rise up and overthrow the Taliban? The answer is, they're starved, exhausted, hurt, incapacitated, suffering. A few years ago, the United Nations estimated that there are 500,000 disabled orphans in Afghanistan -- a country with no economy, no food. There are millions of widows. And the Taliban has been burying these widows alive in mass graves. The soil is littered with land mines, the farms were all destroyed by the Soviets. These are a few of the reasons why the Afghan people have not overthrown the Taliban.

We come now to the question of bombing Afghanistan back to the Stone Age. Trouble is, that's been done. The Soviets took care of it already. Make the Afghans suffer? They're already suffering. Level their houses? Done. Turn their schools into piles of rubble? Done. Eradicate their hospitals? Done. Destroy their infrastructure? Cut them off from medicine and healthcare? Too late. Someone already did all that. New bombs would only stir the rubble of earlier bombs. Would they at least get the Taliban? Not likely. In today's Afghanistan, only the Taliban eat, only they have the means to move around. They'd slip away and hide. Maybe the bombs would get some of those disabled orphans; they don't move too fast, they don't even have wheelchairs. But flying over Kabul and dropping bombs wouldn't really be a strike against the criminals who did this horrific thing. Actually it would only be making common cause with the Taliban -- by raping

Here is a place to record your thoughts and questions as you read.

once again the people they've been raping all this time.

Here is a place to record your thoughts and questions as you read.

So what else is there? What can be done, then? Let me now speak with true fear and trembling. The only way to get Bin Laden is to go in there with ground troops. When people speak of "having the belly to do what needs to be done" they're thinking in terms of having the belly to kill as many as needed. Having the belly to overcome any moral qualms about killing innocent people. Let's pull our heads out of the sand. What's actually on the table is Americans dying. And not just because some Americans would die fighting their way through Afghanistan to Bin Laden's hideout. It's much bigger than that, folks. Because to get any troops to Afghanistan, we'd have to go through Pakistan. Would they let us? Not likely. The conquest of Pakistan would have to be first. Will other Muslim nations just stand by? You see where I'm going. We're flirting with a world war between Islam and the West.

And guess what: That's bin Laden's program. That's exactly what he wants. That's why he did this. Read his speeches and statements. It's all right there. He really believes Islam would beat the West. It might seem ridiculous, but he figures if he can polarize the world into Islam and the West, he's got a billion soldiers. If the West wreaks a holocaust in those lands, that's a billion people with nothing left to lose; that's even better from Bin Laden's point of view. He's probably wrong -- in the end the West would win, whatever that would mean -- but the war would last for years and millions would die, not just theirs but ours.

Who has the belly for that? Bin Laden does. Anyone else?

17.
Name _____

Afghanistan: The Route to Riches

By Andy Rowell

Here is a place to record your
thoughts and questions as you read.

As the war in Afghanistan unfolds, there is frantic diplomatic activity to ensure that any post-Taliban government will be both democratic and pro-West. Hidden in this explosive geo-political equation is the sensitive issue of securing control and export of the region's vast oil and gas reserves. The Soviets estimated Afghanistan's proven and probable natural gas reserves at 5 trillion cubic feet - enough for the United Kingdom's requirement for two years - but this remains largely untapped because of the country's civil war and poor pipeline infrastructure.

More importantly, according to the U.S. government, "Afghanistan's significance from an energy standpoint stems from its geographical position as a potential transit route for oil and natural gas exports from central Asia to the Arabian Sea."

To the north of Afghanistan lies the Caspian and central Asian region, one of the world's last great frontiers for the oil industry due to its tremendous untapped reserves. The U.S. government believes that total oil reserves could be 270 billion barrels. Total gas reserves could be 576 trillion cubic feet.

The presence of these oil reserves and the possibility of their export raises new strategic concerns for the U.S. and other Western industrial powers. "As oil companies build oil pipelines from the Caucasus and central Asia to supply Japan and the West, these strategic concerns gain military implications," argued an article in the *Military Review*, the journal of the U.S. Army, earlier in the year.

Here is a place to record your thoughts and questions as you

Host governments and Western oil companies have been rushing to get in on the act. Kazakhstan, it is believed, could earn \$700 billion from offshore oil and gas fields over the next 40 years. Both American and British oil companies have struck black gold. In April 1993, Chevron concluded a \$20 billion joint venture to develop the Tengiz oil field, with 6 to 9 billion barrels of estimated oil reserves in Kazakhstan alone. The following year, in what was described as "the deal of the century," AIOC, an international consortium of companies led by British Petroleum, signed an \$8 billion deal to exploit reserves estimated at 3-5 billion barrels in Azerbaijan.

The oil industry has long been trying to find a way to bring the oil and gas to market. This frustration was evident in the submission by oil company Unocal's vice-president John Maresca, before the U.S. House of Representatives in 1998: "Central Asia is isolated. Their natural resources are landlocked, both geographically and politically. Each of the countries in the Caucasus and central Asia faces difficult political challenges. Some have unsettled wars or latent conflicts."

The industry has been looking at different routes. The Caspian Pipeline Consortium (CPC) route is 1,000 miles west from Tengiz in Kazakhstan to the Russian Black Sea port of Novorossiisk and came on stream in October. Oil will go by tanker through the Bosphorus to the Mediterranean. Another route being considered by AIOC goes from Baku through Tbilisi in Georgia to Ceyhan in Turkey. However, parts of the route are seen as politically unstable as it goes through the Kurdistan region of Turkey and its \$3 billion price tag is prohibitively expensive.

But even if these pipelines are built, they would not be enough to exploit the region's vast oil and gas reserves. Nor crucially would they have the capacity to move oil to where it is

really needed, the growing markets of Asia. Other export pipelines must therefore be built. One option is to go east across China, but at 3,000 kilometers it is seen as too long. Another option

Here is a place to record your thoughts and questions as you read.

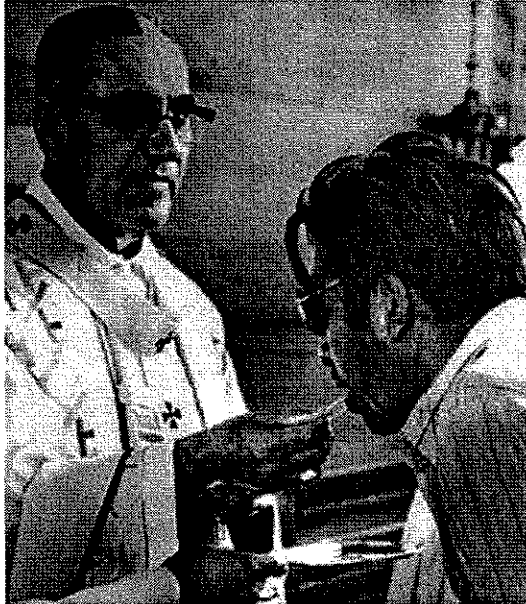
18.

Backyard Terrorism

Washington has been training terrorists at a Georgia base for years, and is still at it.

By George Monbiot

"If any government sponsors the outlaws and killers of innocents," George Bush announced on the day he began bombing Afghanistan, "they have become outlaws and murderers themselves. And they will take that lonely path at their own peril."



I'm glad he said "any government" as there's one which, though it has yet to be identified as a sponsor of terrorism, requires his urgent attention. For the past 55 years it has been running a terrorist training camp, whose victims massively outnumber the people killed by the attack on New York, the Embassy bombings, and the other atrocities laid, rightly or wrongly, at Al Qaeda's door.

The camp is called the Western Hemisphere Institute for Security Cooperation, or Whisc. It is based in Fort Benning, GA, and it is funded by Mr. Bush's government.

Until January this year, Whisc was called the "School of the Americas," or SOA. Since 1946, SOA has trained more than 60,000 Latin-American soldiers and policemen. Among its graduates are many of the continent's most notorious torturers, mass murderers, dictators, and state terrorists. As hundreds of pages of documentation compiled by the pressure group SOA Watch show, Latin America has been ripped apart by its alumni.

In June this year, Colonel Byron Lima Estrada, once a student at the school, was convicted in Guatemala City of murdering Bishop Juan Gerardi in 1998. Gerardi was killed because he had helped to write a report on the atrocities committed by Guatemala's D-2, the military intelligence agency run by Lima

Here is a place to record your thoughts and feelings as you read.

Estrada with the help of two other SOA graduates. D-2 coordinated the "anti-insurgency" campaign which obliterated 448 Mayan Indian villages, and murdered tens of thousands of their people. Forty percent of the cabinet ministers who served the genocidal regimes of Lucas Garcia, Rios Montt and Mejia Victores studied at the School of the Americas.

Here is a place to record your thoughts and feelings as you read.

In 1993, the United Nations truth commission on El Salvador named the army officers who had committed the worst atrocities of the civil war. Two-thirds of them had been trained at the School of the Americas. Among them were Roberto D'Aubuisson, the leader of El Salvador's death squads; the men who killed Archbishop Oscar Romero; and 19 of the 26 soldiers who murdered the Jesuit priests in 1989. In Chile, the school's graduates ran both Augusto Pinochet's secret police and his three principal concentration camps. One of them helped to murder Orlando Letelier and Ronni Moffit in Washington DC in 1976.

Argentina's dictators Roberto Viola and Leopoldo Galtieri, Panama's Manuel Noriega and Omar Torrijos, Peru's Juan Velasco Alvarado and Ecuador's Guillermo Rodriguez all benefited from the school's instruction. So did the leader of the Grupo Colina death squad in Fujimori's Peru; four of the five officers who ran the infamous Battalion 3-16 in Honduras (which controlled the death squads there in the 1980s), and the commander responsible for the 1994 Ocosingo massacre in Mexico.

All this, the school's defenders insist, is ancient history. But SOA graduates are also involved in the dirty war now being waged, with US support, in Colombia. In 1999 the US State Department's report on human rights named two SOA graduates as the murderers of the peace commissioner, Alex Lopera. Last year, Human Rights Watch revealed that seven former pupils are running paramilitary groups there and have commissioned kidnappings, disappearances, murders, and massacres. In February this year an SOA graduate in Colombia was convicted of complicity in the torture and killing of 30 peasants by paramilitaries. The school is now drawing more of its students from Colombia than from any other country.

The FBI defines terrorism as "violent acts... intended to intimidate or coerce a civilian population, influence the policy of a government, or affect the conduct of a government," which is a precise description of the activities of SOA's graduates. But how can we be sure that their alma mater has had any part in this? Well, in 1996, the US government was forced to release seven of the school's training manuals. Among other top tips for terrorists, they recommended blackmail, torture, execution, and the arrest of witnesses' relatives.

Last year, partly as a result of the campaign run by SOA Watch, several U.S. congressmen tried to shut the school down. They were defeated by 10 votes. Instead, the House of

Representatives voted to close it and then immediately reopened it under a different name.

We can't expect this terrorist training camp to reform itself: after all, it refuses even to acknowledge that it has a past, let alone to learn from it. What should we do about the "evil-doers" in Fort, Benning, GA?

The Plight of the Afghan Woman

The vast majority of Afghanistan's population professes to be followers of Islam. Over 1400 years ago, Islam demanded that men and women be equal before God, and gave them various rights such the right to inheritance, the right to vote, the right to work, and even choose their own partners in marriage. For centuries now in Afghanistan, women have been denied these rights either by official government decree or by their own husbands, fathers, and brothers. During the rule of the Taliban (1996 - 2001), women were treated worse than in any other time or by any other society. They were forbidden to work, leave the house without a male escort, not allowed to seek medical help from a male doctor, and forced to cover themselves from head to toe, even covering their eyes. Women who were doctors and teachers before, suddenly were forced to be beggars and even prostitutes in order to feed their families.

Since the fall of the Taliban in late 2001, many would agree that the political and cultural position of Afghan women has improved substantially. The recently adopted Afghan constitution states that "the citizens of Afghanistan - whether man or woman- have equal rights and duties before the law". So far, women have been allowed to return back to work, the government no longer forces them to wear the all covering burqa, and they even have been appointed to prominent positions in the government. Despite all these changes many challenges still remain. The repression of women is still prevalent in rural areas where many families still restrict their own mothers, daughters, wives and sisters from participation in public life. They are still forced into marriages and denied a basic education. Numerous school for girls have been burned down and little girls have even been poisoned to death for daring to go to school.

<http://www.afghan-web.com/woman/>

Here is a place to record your thoughts and questions while you read.

Motif Tracking Through Dialogue Journals

motif (moh-TEEF): a recurring object, concept, or structure in a work of literature. A motif may also be two contrasting elements in a work, such as good and evil. In the Book of Genesis, we see the motif of separation again and again throughout the story. In the very first chapter, God separates the light from the darkness. Abraham and his descendants are separated from the rest of the nation as God's chosen people. Joseph is separated from his brothers in order that life might be preserved. Another motif is water, seen in Genesis as a means of destroying the wicked and in Matthew as a means of remitting sins by the employment of baptism. Other motifs in Genesis and Matthew include blood sacrifices, fire, lambs, and goats. A motif is important because it allows one to see main points and themes that the author is trying to express, in order that one might be able to interpret the work more accurately. See *A Handbook to Literature, The Concise Oxford Dictionary of Literary Terms*. **Robert Bean, Student, University of North Carolina at Pembroke**

Rationale

This is an active reading strategy, one that will help students engage with a text in a way that will deepen and expand their understanding of a novel that is otherwise removed from their own experiences by culture, age, and dialect. Following a literary motif will enable students to better understand the literary subtext and the author's stylistic devices. And most importantly, we want students to develop empathy for the characters and the world they inhabit; a close reading and textual analysis may lead to a better understanding of both the character's world and their own world.

Procedure

Start by discussing the definition of motif. Remember that motifs are meant to unify the work as a whole. Ask students to think of films or other novels and identify motifs. For example, in the film *Smoke Signals* the director keeps coming back to images and scenes of water, fire, basketball games, fry bread, and storytelling. In Alfred Hitchcock's *Vertigo* geometric designs and film angles (bird's eye view) help convey tone and theme development. In the novel *The Color Purple* music, color, and flowers are woven in and out as symbols of hope and reconciliation. In small groups ask students to discuss how motif applies to the list below and then briefly share ideas with the whole class.

- Art
- Architecture
- Interior design
- Restaurants

The next step is to read the first three chapters of *The Kite Runner* and brainstorm a list of motifs. The following is a list of the more accessible motifs: *Kites, games, friendship, dreams, trees, clothing, deformity/scars (seen & unseen), music, weapons (slingshots,*

brass knuckles), food, colors, gifts, vehicles and books. Students will need to pick several of the motifs to track throughout the novel.

Once they have picked their motifs, they will need to follow their development throughout the novel. This format maybe useful for students:

| <u>Motif</u> | <u>Interpretation</u> |
|---|--|
| <i>On this side, write the page number and the motif...</i> | <i>On this side discuss the author's purpose, tone, and your own insight...</i> |
| <i>Example: Pg. 2 "I sat on a Bench near a willow <u>tree</u>."</i> | <i>A willow tree is also known as a "Weeping Willow." Weeping Willows are beautiful full trees with graceful spreading leaves and branches. In this example, the main character has just received a phone call. A voice from his past. He is thinking about an incident that happened when he was twelve. There is a sadness about him. He must have done something regrettable because his friend is offering him a way out. I wonder who wept...</i> |

Suggestions:

- 1. Kite-making:** Have students make kites as an art tie-in and use the motifs as a tail or the kite design itself could reflect the motif (they can write them out and glue them on). Kite making ideas and directions are on the following page.
- 2. Small group discussions:** Students can get together with others working on the same motif and share/compare dialogue journals on a regular basis.

Mapping Afghanistan

Rationale: This is a map-making activity. This will help students make connections to the text by learning where Afghanistan is located and they will begin to understand the regional, geographic, social, and political boundaries/areas.

Procedure:

Step 1 - Give students a blank map of Afghanistan. Then have them research (map quest) the area on the Internet. Have students label: cities, towns, villages, mountain passes, lakes, other geographical features, socio/political boundaries, and neighboring countries and cities mentioned in the book. Use your own judgment about how much they should label.

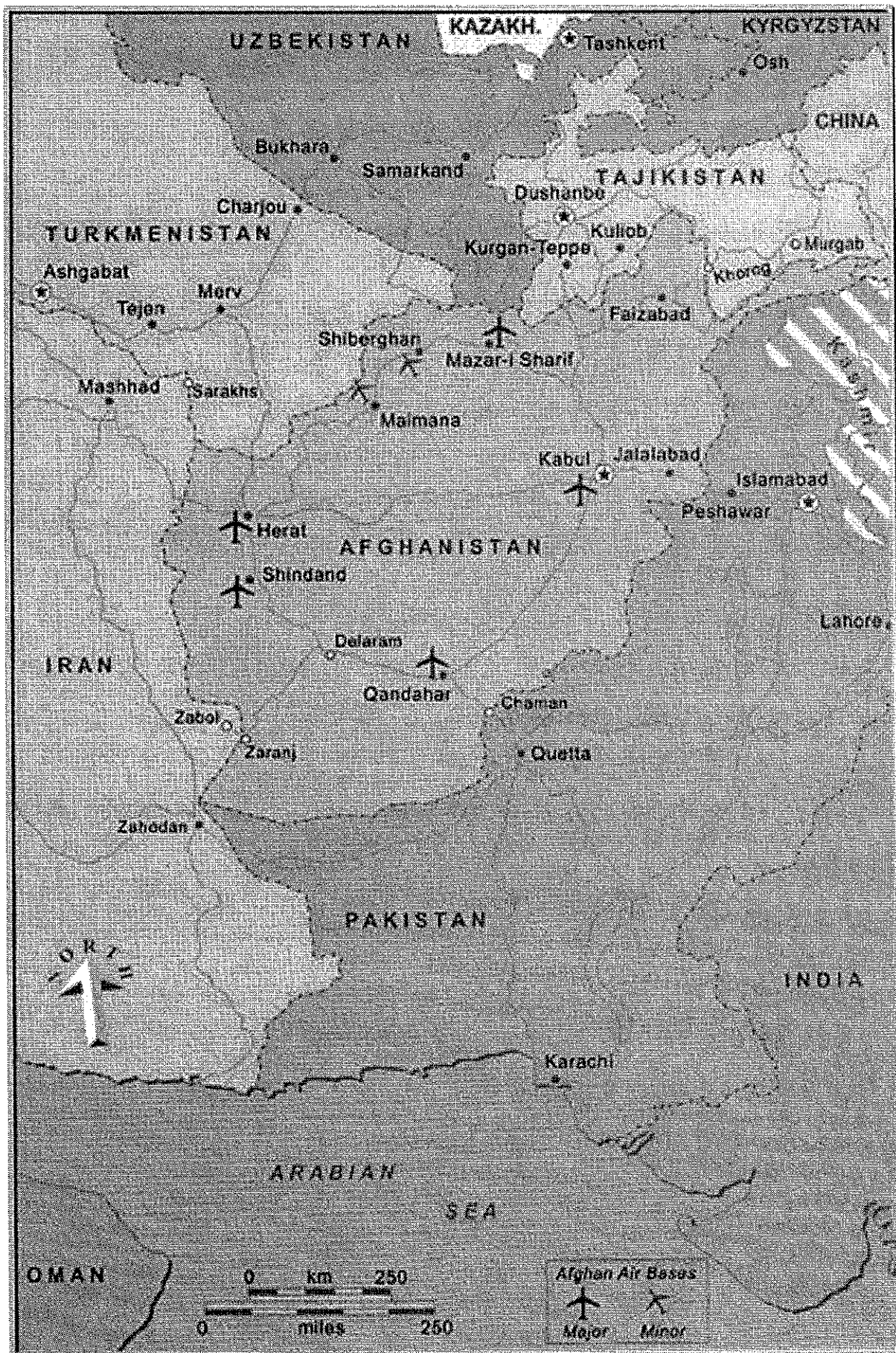
If you want to take this a step further, have students recreate their maps on construction paper. I think this extra step reinforces the concepts. The transferring of information from one map to another is using repetition in an artful creative way. They can keep the map as part of their portfolio for the unit. Or hang them around the classroom.

Step 2 - Next, on construction paper, have students recreate their map of Afghanistan, using different colors to highlight the various aspects. Students can be creative with this.



Find a map of Afghanistan on the Internet

Label cities, towns, mountain passes, mountains, lakes, cities and neighboring countries and cities.



Socratic Seminar #1: Chapters 1 – 12

Pashtunwali: Characters and Conduct

Rationale: The focus of this Socratic Seminar is to describe and analyze to what extent the characters are governed by cultural codes and to evaluate the benefits of their behaviors. Students will learn about aspects of Afghan culture through close readings of fiction and non-fiction text, active discussion, and careful listening. There are several writing opportunities pre- and post- seminar.

Preparation:

1. See the Guidelines for the Socratic Seminar in the *Reading and Writing Strategies for Academic Literacy and CIM Implementation for Portland Public Schools*.
2. Prior to the Socratic Seminar (as homework from the previous day), the participants should complete the attached **Character Tracking Chart**.
3. Prior to the Socratic Seminar (possibly at the beginning of class if a block class), students should read the attached **Pashtunwali** text.
4. Remember, the goal is for students to engage in dialogue, not debate—using the text to support their observations, maintaining an open mind, building on each other's ideas, sharing air time, and speaking to each other. Post these as norms and debrief the seminar within light of the norms.

Optional guiding questions (one prompt may be all that is required):

- Students share and dialogue about their **Character Tracking Charts** to establish what is happening in the book.
- Students discuss who follows aspects of the **Pashtunwali** teachings.
- Who most closely follows the Pashtunwali Code? How do others benefit? Is anyone harmed?
- What is the role of women? How are they affected by the Pashtunwali?
- Select specific quotes from the text to discuss that through the lens of individual behaviors and the larger society:
 - Page 2 Amir remembers Rahim Khan's advice: "There is a way to be good again."
 - What are the underlying assumptions in that statement?
 - What did Amir do?
 - What should he do? Do you agree?
 - Would that make him 'good again'? Who decides?
 - Is Amir following the teachings of Pashtunwali? Is Rahim Khan?
 - Page 99 Rahim Khan states "And I'll tell you this, Amir, jan: In the end, the world always wins. That's just the way of things."
 - Does this conflict with Rahim's earlier statements?
 - What does the 'world winning' look like?
 - What is the role of free will for the characters?
 - Is Amir following the teachings of Pashtunwali? Is Rahim Khan?

| Characters | Describe their moral code. What do they seem to believe about right and wrong? | What events/actions suggest this? (include page numbers) | What are the consequences/results of their actions? | Who else was affected by their actions? How? |
|------------|---|---|---|--|
| Amir | | | | |
| Baba | | | | |

| Characters | Describe their moral code. What do they seem to believe about right and wrong? | What events/actions suggest this? (include page numbers) | What are the consequences/results of their actions? | Who else was affected by their actions? How? |
|------------|---|---|---|--|
| Sanaubar | | | | |
| Hassan | | | | |

| Characters | Describe their moral code. What do they seem to believe about right and wrong? | What events/actions suggest this? (include page numbers) | What are the consequences/results of their actions? | Who else was affected by their actions? How? |
|------------|---|---|---|--|
| Rahim Khan | | | | |
| Other | | | | |

Pashtunwali

Are all ethnic Afghans also Pashtuns? Contemporaries may say yes, while the orthodox will often say no. For those who say no, the deciding factor is dependent on how one lives one's life. Many say that even if someone is born an ethnic Afghan, because this requires no personal effort, that person is not a Pashtun without living according to Pashtunwali. A Pashtun is an ancient religious, spiritual, and community identity tied to a specific set of beliefs, codes, and a linear record of history spanning over 5000 years. Intrinsically flexible and dynamic, Pashtunwali has core tenets including self-respect, independence, justice, hospitality, love, forgiveness, and tolerance to all (especially to the stranger or guest). Besides the core tenets, Pashtunwali is unique to every Pashtun, and it is considered a personal responsibility to discover what Pashtunwali is.

Teachings

- **faith** - trust in Yahweh, God, or Allah (known as *the One, the Creator, or the Architect of the Universe*)
- **unity** - Pashtunwali unites the Pashtun as one people across the world. Where there is true unity, every effort to disunite us will only serve to strengthen the unity we have. What happens to one happens to all.
- **freedom and independence** - the belief that freedom in physical, mental, religious, spiritual, political and economic realms is for all to pursue, man and woman, so long as it is done without bringing harm to others.
- **hospitality** - being hospitable to **all**, especially guests and strangers, and, at times, even the most hostile of enemies is a key teaching.
- **justice and forgiveness** - Pashtunwali also teaches us if one intentionally wrongs you, you have the right to seek eye-for-an-eye justice. As long as you do not overzealously avenge the injustice done to you, whomever has wronged you may not avenge your justified reaction.
- **brotherhood, friendship, and trust** - the belief that fellow Pashtun brothers should be trusted and assisted to the greatest extent possible without bringing harm to oneself.
- **honor** - the belief that Pashtuns should maintain their independent human dignity. Family honor is dependent on women being perfectly chaste to the point of being "invisible" outside of the family. For example, they cover themselves with a garment that prevents them being identified as an individual.
- **self-respect** - the belief that individuals must respect themselves, and respect others in order to be able to do so, especially those they do not know and do not share common beliefs with. Respect begins in the home, with wives, mothers, and children.
- **family** - the belief that the family unit must be glorified under a sacred conviction of responsibility and duty with respect for wives, daughters, elders, parents, sons, and husbands. Also, recognizing that new wisdom is without the barrier of age or gender, encouraging good ideas through the support of elders creates the most enlightened community of all.
- **Pashtun history** - great value is placed in Pashtun history, with all its depth and pluralism, tragedies and victories, spanning over 5000 years. It teaches us to keep the mind open, to continue the search for the truth, much of which has vanished under history itself.

Acting It Out

Mullah Nasrudin stories activity

Day One

- Introduce Mullah Nasrudin stories. (See info following this page.)
- Have the students choose a partner.
- Pass out the Mullah Nasrudin stories and have the pair read their fable together and decide how they will act it out. They will also need to decide on the lesson or moral that the story teaches.
- Give them a little time to read and plan and then have them present their story to the class by acting it out.
- After they have acted it out, have them ask the class what the lesson or moral of the story is. Have them share what they think it is.
- Do as many of these as you can the first day. You may have to finish them up on day two.
- Tell the students to think of a story that they have heard growing up that is a fable or folktale. Have them write it down and bring it into class to share it on day two of this activity.

Day Two

- Have students finish acting out their Mullah Nasrudin stories.
- Ask students to share the fables they wrote down.
- Decide on the lesson(s) or moral(s) of the fable as a class.
- Discuss the purpose of a fable.

Mullah Nasrudin Stories

Mullah Nasrudin is a favorite character in stories throughout all of the Middle East. Children in Afghanistan hear Mullah Nasrudin stories just as American children hear Mother Goose rhymes and folktales. Many of the stories teach a lesson while others just tell a funny story. Many of these teaching stories come from Sufi sources and are about a character called Mullah Nasrudin. Many nations of the Middle East claim the Mullah as their own, however, the Mullah, like all mythological characters, belongs to all humanity. The Mullah is a wise fool and his stories have many meanings on multiple levels of reality. These stories show, among other things, that things are not always as they appear and often, logic fails us.

Places in the novel where the stories are mentioned:

p. 28 Amir reads a Mullah Nasrudin story to Hassan

P. 266-267 Farid and Amir swap Mullah Nasrudin stories

Sources:

<http://www.spiritual-teachers.com/stories/mullah.htm>

<http://www.public.asu.edu/~aprilsen/afghanistan4kids/nasrudin.html>

<http://www.lechantier.com/jodorowsky/mullah.htm>

Mullah Runs an Errand.

Nasrudin's wife asked him to go buy a dozen pins. Mullah left with his ass to transport the cargo. He bought a dozen pins and stowed them in the saddle. When his wife saw him coming, she said, astonished: "Why did you take the ass to transport a dozen pins? You could have carried them in your own tunic!"

The next morning, she told him: "Go buy some firewood!"

Mullah immediately left to buy some. He returned carrying the firewood in his tunic, which by then was in tatters.

"What happened to you?" asked his wife, furious. "Look at the state of your clothes! Why did you do such a thing?"

"Didn't you say my tunic was good for carrying things? I followed your advice."

A Watchful Man

"How do you proceed when you go to do your ablutions at the river's edge?" asked Mullah of a peasant.

"Well, I take off my clothes and I get in the water."

"Even in the water you don't forget to face Mecca?"

"Facing Mecca, sure... but the most important thing is that I never take my eye off the place where I left my clothes, ever since the time when a thief stole them from me."

All Asses, Except Me.

Mullah went to buy himself an ass. The ass market was at its height, full of peasants. In midst of the tumult, Nasrudin heard a guy confirm that there were only asses and peasants present, nothing else.

"Are you a peasant?" asked Mullah of the guy.

"Me? No..."

"Well, say no more!" laughed Nasrudin.

Improvised Move.

A thief broke in to Mullah Nasrudin's house. Catching him in the act, Mullah hid in a corner. The thief got away with everything. Mullah witnessed the robbery, followed the wrongdoer to his home and courteously approached him: "Thanks, stranger, for moving all my personal effects and furniture. You took them from my sordid home where I was rotting away with my family. Now we'll just live here. I'm going to get my wife and kids so we can all immediately begin to enjoy your hospitality."

The thief, anguished by the thought of inheriting all these people, immediately replied: "Take everything, but keep your family and your problems!"

Mullah's Overcoat.

Going downstairs from the terrace at his house where he had just awakened from a nap, Nasrudin missed a step and fell down the stairs.

"What happened to you?" asked his wife upon hearing the clatter of his fall from where she was in the kitchen.

"Nothing at all," replied Nasrudin getting up with some difficulty, "my overcoat fell on the stairs."

"Your coat? And what was all that racket?"

"The racket was because I was inside the coat."

Neither Yes Nor No!

Mullah Nasrudin is brought to trial, accused by his wife of assault and battery. Before facing the judge, Mullah prepares his answers. He tells himself: "If the judge asks me if I hit her, I'll say no, and if he asks me if I didn't hit her, I'll say yes. That's easy enough!"

In the courtroom, the judge asks him: "Mullah, have you finally stopped beating your wife?"

"Noyesno!" stammers Mullah, surprised.

Nine or Ten?

One night, Mullah Nasrudin had a strange dream: an unknown wealthy man visited him and gave him nine dinars. Mullah asked him: "And why only nine? Give me another, to make it a round number."

The man ignored him. Mullah insisted, begged, and groveled so much that he finally woke up. Seeing his empty hand, he cursed his bad character that had made him lose his unexpected gift. Next, laying himself back down to sleep, he closed his eyes, held out his hand, and excused himself: "Ok, fine, just give me the nine dinars."

Nothing Compares With Experience.

Mullah fell down the stairs and hurt himself badly. Despite all the ointments and potions he used, the pain made him suffer terribly. His friends went to comfort him:

"It could have been worse," said one of them.

"After all, you didn't break anything," opined another.

"You'll get better soon," intervened a third.

At the height of his pain, however, Mullah screamed at them: "Leave, all of you! Get out of this room immediately! Mom, don't let anybody else in, unless it's someone who has fallen down a stairway."

Taking Some Weight Off.

One day, Mullah Nasrudin went to the woods to look for firewood. After loading his bundles on his back, he gets on his ass and heads home.

"Why are you carrying those bundles on your back?" asked some people passing by along the way, laughing at him.

"Men of little faith, this poor beast is carrying my body, do you expect me to add additional weight as well? I'm carrying the bundles on my back to avoid overloading him."

The Candle in the Dark.

Nasrudin was calmly speaking with a friend at the latter's house when they were surprised by how dark it had become.

"It's dark out there," said the friend, "I can hardly see a thing. Light a candle; they're over there to your left."

"How am I going to tell my left from my right in the dark?" replied Mullah.

The Chili Peppers.

In his travels, Mullah Nasrudin arrives in a small town. At the plaza, he stops at a fruit stand and admires the exotic fruits for sale.

"These fruits look great. Give me a pound!" he says to the vendor, then leaves, satisfied with his purchase.

A little ways down the street, he takes a bite of one of the red fruits and his mouth immediately goes up in flames. He turns beet red. He cries. Still, he keeps right on eating.

A passing observer approaches him. "Excuse me, what are you doing?"

"Since I believed these fruits to be delicious, I thought one wouldn't be enough so I bought a whole pound.

"I see, but why do you keep on eating them? They're chili peppers, hot ones at that."

"What I'm eating now aren't really chili peppers," says Mullah burping, "it's my money."

The Dream

Mullah Nasrudin's son went to see his father and told him: "Last night I dreamed you gave me a hundred afghanis.

"Fine," said Mullah, "since you're a wise little boy, I'm not going to take from you those hundred afghanis I gave you in your dream. You can save them and buy yourself whatever you want with them."

The Glass of Milk.

Mullah Nasrudin showed up at the dairy with a little glass.

"Give me a quart of cow's milk in my glass please," he asked the milkman.

"I can't put a whole quart of cow's milk in there!" exclaimed the milkman stupefied.

"Fine, then make it a quart of goat's milk!"

The Grammarian.

Mullah Nasrudin is a boatman. One day, he's transporting a grammarian in his boat. Along the way the latter asks him: "Do you know grammar?"

"Not at all," replies Mullah.

"Well, allow me to tell you that you've lost half your life!" disdainfully replies the scholar.

A little later, the wind begins to blow and the boat is swallowed by waves. As the boat is about to sink, Mullah asks his passenger: "Do you know how to swim?"

"No!" answers the grammarian, terrified.

"Well, allow me to tell you that you've lost all your life!"

The Lost Ass.

Mullah had lost his ass. He went into the market and begged everybody to help him find it. He promised a reward of the ass itself, as well as a saddle and harness to go along with it, to whoever found the animal. When asked why he was going through so much trouble to find the ass, if he was just going to give it away as a reward, Mullah explained: "Perhaps none of you know the pleasure of finding something you've lost?"

The Lost Ass#2

Nasrudin's ass got lost, surely in the nearby hills. Instead of looking for it, however, Mullah went around the streets of town shouting: "Blessed be Allah! Blessed be Allah!"

The townspeople knew how close Mullah was to his ass, as well as the dangers posed to the animal by the pack of wolves up in the surrounding hillside. Surprised, they exclaimed:

"How can you give thanks to Allah for having lost your ass! Wouldn't you be better off asking for his help?"

"You definitely don't understand a thing. I give thanks to Allah that I wasn't riding my ass when it got lost."

The Sweet Roll

While passing in front of a pastry shop, Mullah felt an intense desire to eat a sweet roll. Even though he didn't have so much as a penny in his pocket, he went in and began to eat. After a brief moment, the baker gave him the check, but Nasrudin didn't pay him any attention at all. The baker pulled out his rolling pin and began to beat Mullah without stopping. As he was receiving his clubbing, Mullah kept on having his fill of the sweet rolls. Smiling, he said: "What a kind city! Its people are so affable! They beat you to make you keep eating sweet rolls!"

The Truth in its Place.

"If you find the truth, grab it and throw it into the well!" said a wise man to Mullah Nasrudin.

Later, Mullah ran into a blind woman who asked him to help her cross the street.

"What is your name, ma'am?" inquired Mullah.

"My name is Truth," replied the woman.

Nasrudin immediately grabbed her and threw her into the well.

Where's Your Ear, Mullah?

"Where's your left ear?" someone asked Mullah.

"Here it is!" he replied, reaching his right arm over his head and touching his left ear.

"Why are you doing that? Wouldn't it be so much easier to use you left hand to touch the ear on the same side?"

"It would certainly be easier, but if I did it like everyone else, I wouldn't be Mullah Nasrudin."

A Problematic Egg.

Mullah Nasrudin was taking a walk with his son when they discovered an egg lying on the ground.

"Dad, how do the birds get into the egg?" asked the boy.

Disoriented, Mullah replied: "I've been asking myself all my life how the birds got out of the egg and now here I've got another problem to solve!"

A Sacred Milestone.

One day, a merchant came to a small town with his caravan. The moment he passed before the temple, he got a stomach cramp so bad he couldn't contain himself and defecated right in front of the door to the sacred building. Caught with his pants down, he was brought before Mullah Nasrudin, the town judge.

"Was it your intention to insult us?" asked Mullah.

"Absolutely. I couldn't avoid doing what I did."

"Fine. Which do you prefer, a beating or a fine?"

"I'd prefer the fine."

"Perfect. You'll have to pay the court one dinar in gold."

"The merchant reached inside his pocket and pulled out a coin.

"I've got a two dinar coin. Cut it in two and keep half," proposed the merchant.

Mullah Nasrudin took the coin, examined it, and replied:

"No, this coin should not be cut. I'm going to keep it and tomorrow you can defecate in front of the temple again."

Duck Soup.

One day, a peasant went to visit Nasrudin, attracted by his great fame and desirous of meeting the most illustrious man in the land. As a gift, the peasant brought along a magnificent duck. Mullah Nasrudin, honored by the offering, invited the man in to dine and spend the night in his house. The next day, the peasant returned to his fields, happy to have spent a few hours with such an important figure.

A few days later, the peasant's children went to the city and on the way home dropped by to see Mullah. They introduced themselves: "We're the children of the man who gave you the duck."

Mullah received them and treated them well.

A week later, two young people knocked on Nasrudin's door.

"Who are you?"

"We're the neighbors of the man who gave you the duck."

Mullah began to lament having accepted a gift so inconvenient as that duck. Still, he smiled and invited the guests in to eat.

Eight days later, a whole family showed up and asked Mullah for some hospitality.

"Who are you?" asked Mullah, a bit irritated by the invasion.

"We're the neighbors of the neighbors of the man who gave you a duck."

Mullah acted as though he were perfectly pleased and invited them all in to the dining room. After a few minutes, he appeared with a huge soup kettle full of hot water. He happily filled his guests' bowls with this liquid.

One of them spoke up for the group and asked: "What is this, noble sir Mullah? For Allah's sake, we've never seen such a soup!"

"This is the broth of the broth of the broth of the duck that I'm happy to offer to you, the neighbors of the neighbors of the man who gave me that damned bird," Nasrudin calmly replied.

Mullah, His Ass, and the Saddlebags.

Mounted on his ass, Nasrudin was carrying some heavy saddlebags on his back.

"Why don't you put the saddlebags on your ass's shoulders?" suggested a passerby.

"Are you crazy?" replied Mullah, "in addition to carrying me, you want my ass to carry the saddlebags as well?"

The Stupidest Man in the World.

Once upon a time there were two brothers. One, unlike the other, always had good luck. The brother who lived in misery went to see his lucky brother who lived in a palace. When he arrived at the door, he was met by a blue gnome.

"Who are you?" he asked the gnome.

"I'm your brother's good luck," answered the little being.

"Would you like to lend me your services?" implored the unlucky one.

"That would be impossible. I'm your brother's good luck and in no way could I ever be yours."

"And where's mine?"

"It's a little green gnome who lives at the summit of that mountain over there. Go look for him! He's sleeping, but you can wake him up."

"I'll go," replied the unlucky brother, thrilled by the idea of finding his good luck.

He began his walk to the top of the mountain but when he went around an enormous rock, he ran right into a ferocious lion.

"Little lion, don't harm me!" he pleaded. "I'm going to wake up my good luck. Ask of me whatever you like and it will give it to you, since it's very wise."

"Fine. I'll let you go," answered the lion. Still, you have to come back down by this path. Here's my question: Why am I hungry all the time and when will I satisfy my hunger?"

Our good man went back on his way and found the green gnome sleeping at the top of the mountain. Awakening him, he said: "Look, before you tell me anything, I need to go talk to the lion. When will he stop being hungry?"

"He'll stop being hungry when he devours the brain of the stupidest man in the world," replied the gnome.

The young man, abandoning his good luck, went down to see the cat. "I've got your answer!" he exclaimed. "Your hunger will be satisfied when you devour the brain of the stupidest man in the world."

"Fine. I'm going to devour you, since you're the man in question!" explained the lion jumping on the unlucky brother and engulfing him.

Mullah's Nail.

After suffering a few setbacks, Mullah Nasrudin is obligated to sell the home he inherited from his father. Taking advantage of the situation, a man without scruples makes him a lowball offer. Nasrudin knows perfectly well that he's dealing with a thief, but he accepts the offer, under one small condition.

"What's that?" asks the buyer.

"As you can see for yourself, there's a nail in this wall... a nail that was hammered in by my father, and it's the only keepsake I have of him. I'll sell you the house, but I wish to continue on as owner of this nail. If you accept my condition, you've got a deal. As for the nail, I'll obviously have the right to hang anything I want on it.

The buyer relaxes, thinking one nail in a house is no big deal.

"Will you come often?" asks the man.

"No, not too often," responds Mullah.

The buyer accepts the clause. Then they sign a contract for sale before the appropriate authorities, with Mullah Nasrudin continuing on as the legal owner of the nail, with the rights to do whatever he wanted with it. The new owner takes possession of the property and installs himself and his whole family in the house. One day, Nasrudin shows up.

"Can I see my nail?"

"Of course, please come in!" cordially answers the owner.

Mullah enters, becomes absorbed in thought in front of the nail, and leaves.

A few days later, he returns with a small, framed photo of his father.

"Can I see my nail?"

The owner lets him in and Nasrudin hangs his picture (his right, as properly stipulated in the contract).

The next time, he comes with an overcoat and a tunic.

"These are some articles of clothing that belonged to my father. I want to hang them on the nail," Nasrudin tells the owner, who's beginning to show a bit of impatience.

A little time goes by when Mullah arrives hauling a cow's carcass.

"What are you going to do with that carcass?" asks the owner, stupefied.

"The truth is I'm going to hang it on my nail."

He does it right away, deaf to the surprised owner's supplications. The police show up on the scene of the dispute and, based on the contract, uphold Nasrudin's position. The carcass begins to rot, to the dismay of the impotent owner. After a certain time, Nasrudin comes back with another carcass that he hangs on the nail. The stench is so bad that the owner sees himself forced to abandon the property. And that's how Mullah Nasrudin got his house back.

The Kite Runner
Writing Study: the cliché and its opposite

Rationale: Today's lesson focuses on an essential grace note in good writing – avoiding clichéd language and infusing energy into one's prose through the use of original word choice and imagery. The purpose of the lesson is to alert students to the fact that clichés exist and are a hallmark of mediocre writing; to give them some practice in picking clichés out of a 'lineup' of prose candidates; and to invite them to both notice the freshness that characterizes good writing and to strive for that quality in their own writing.

Activity: The lesson grows directly out of a passage on page 197 of The Kite Runner that students will recently have read. The narrator, Amir, prefaces a description of his return to Peshawar and fateful meeting with Rahim Khan with the following paragraph:

A creative writing teacher at San Jose State used to say about clichés; "Avoid them like the plague." Then he'd laugh at his own joke. The class laughed along with him, but I always thought clichés got a bum rap. Because, often, they're dead-on. But the aptness of the clichéd saying is overshadowed by the nature of the saying as a cliché. For example, the "elephant in the (living) room" saying Nothing could more correctly describe the initial moments of my reunion with Rahim Khan.

Begin the lesson by reading this passage aloud. Help students notice that the author, Khaled Hosseini, is deliberately studding this paragraph with clichés as he, perhaps facetiously, defends their use. Ask the question: What is a cliché? After students give their answers, you might explain -- A complete definition requires several hundred words and many qualifying examples in the Oxford Companion to the English Language but the short answer is: "A cliché is a word or phrase regarded as having lost its freshness and vigour through overuse. Because it has been seen by the reader so many times before, the cliché suggests insincerity, lack of thought, or laziness on the part of the writer."

Arguably, there are four phrases in the above passage that qualify as clichés. Two have been identified by the author. Ask students if they can find all four and give them time to do so. Once the phrases have been identified, ask who can rewrite the sentence to express the same idea with clear, or better yet, original, alternative language. (You can put their suggestions on the dry-erase board or overhead. Some possibilities have been listed below.)

- 1) "Avoid them like the plague" *becomes* "avoid them assiduously" (clear)
or "avoid them like Dr. Atkins shuns a plateful of spaghetti." (original)
- 2) "I always thought clichés got a bum rap..." *becomes* "got treated unfairly" (clear)
or "got Abu Ghraib style justice from the writing gurus." (original)

- 3) "Because often, they're
dead on..." *becomes* "often they're accurate" (clear)
or "a lightening rod of truth" (original)
- 4) "The elephant in the (living)
room..." *becomes* "the uncomfortable fact that every-
one is politely trying to ignore" (clear)
or "the homeless person at the freeway
entrance ramp..." (original.)

Now that everyone has the idea, have students practice doing the same thing with the following sentences – identify the cliché, express the core idea in clear alternative language, then create an original image or fresh language alternative to express the same idea. (You may want to divide these up or have students work on them in small groups so they can finish more quickly.)

1. I'd be happy as a clam if you'd go with me to the prom.
2. Don't jump the gun; the stores won't open for another hour.
3. The bottom line is, there will be a fight if you seat Hilary next to Barb at the dinner party.
4. Katya feared losing her I-pod from the word go so she stopped bringing it to school.
5. The news hit Zahir like a ton of bricks.
6. Baba advised Amir that he had better fish or cut bait regarding Saroya; otherwise, he ran the risk of offending General Taheri.
7. It will be quite a feather in your cap if you can identify the cliché in this sentence.
8. After the Detroit Pistons won three games, it was apparent that they were in the driver's seat against the LA Lakers.
9. Phineas asked politely but Priscilla still gave him the cold shoulder.
10. I'm at the end of my rope; one more cliché here and I'm giving up the ghost.

After students share, turn their attention to the opposite of the cliché – that is, original, fresh, creative writing that surprises and enlightens as it entertains. Have them turn to page 189, the conclusion of Chapter Thirteen and read the concluding paragraph together. In this passage, Amir is describing the impact that a failure to conceive a baby is having on his relationship with Soraya:

“Sometimes, Soraya sleeping next to me, I lay in bed and listened to the screen door swinging open and shut with the breeze, to the crickets chirping in the yard. And I could almost feel the emptiness in Soraya’s womb, like it was a living, breathing thing. It had seeped into our marriage, that emptiness, into our laughs, and our lovemaking. And late at night, in the darkness of our room I’d feel it rising from Soraya and settling between us. Sleeping between us. Like a newborn child.”

Why is this brilliant, fresh and original writing? Invite students to take a closer look. What is being compared here? (Paradoxically, the "emptiness" or barrenness the couple is experiencing is being likened to the very newborn child they are not able to conceive.) This is original; a new idea that is both poetically evocative and instantly recognizable as a true statement.

Once students have talked their way through to an appreciation of the author's imaginative construct in this passage, have them go looking for a favorite passage of their own. They can refer to their reader response journals or search directly through the text. Give about ten minutes; their mission – to find a passage that is fresh and original in its evocative language – the opposite of the cliché. Wrap up class by having students read aloud their selections and explain what they noticed going on in the texture of the language that attracted them to the passage.

Comparative Customs: Afghan or Mine?

Rationale:

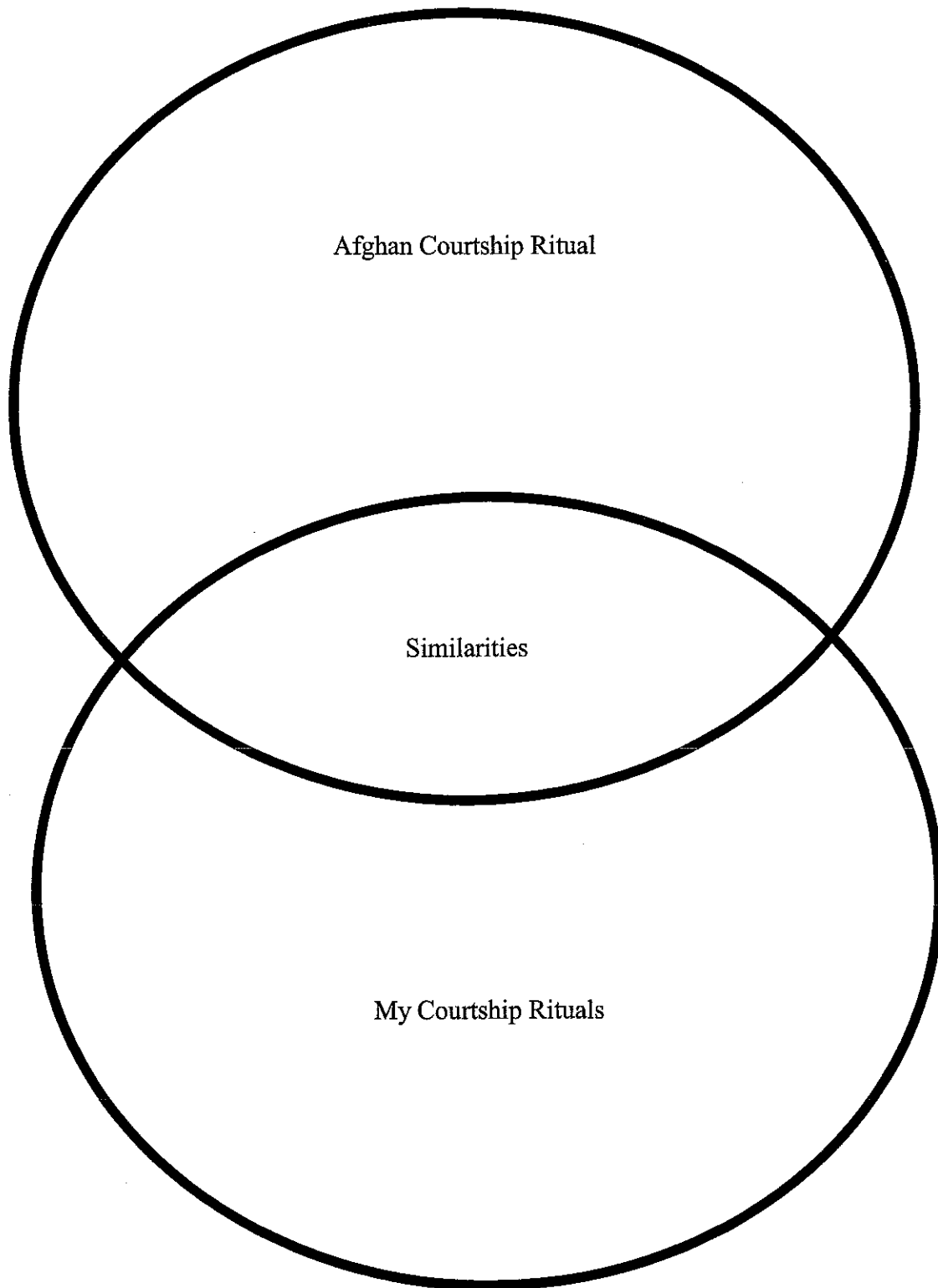
In the novel The Kite Runner, the main character Amir moves to the United States and meets his future wife at the Flea Market. Much attention is given to the social customs that Amir, his father and other Afghan immigrants bring with them when they move to a new place. There are strict "rules of engagement" that all parties must follow to be deemed proper courtship. All of us have social, ethnic and cultural customs related to courtship and marriage that we bring with us into a relationship. Using quotes from the novel found mostly in chapters 11-14, students will complete a Venn diagram that will compare and contrast Afghan customs with those that they are most familiar with. Amir cannot even carry on a discussion with Soroya without an adult present. Although this may seem harsh, not all cultures are as open about courtship rituals as those currently practiced in the United States.

Procedure:

After reading through at least chapter 14, students will brainstorm a list of courtship, educational, career, adoption customs/philosophies depicted in the novel, using quotes and page numbers for supporting evidence. Then, each individual student should compile their own list that is defined by their own particular culture. After completing their lists, students may use the attached Venn diagram to graphically organize the information to compare and contrast courtship customs. Another possible way to present the information could be a poster. Diagrams or posters could be put around the room as a carousel so the class may walk around and view each other's work. This will be background work for a Socratic Seminar.

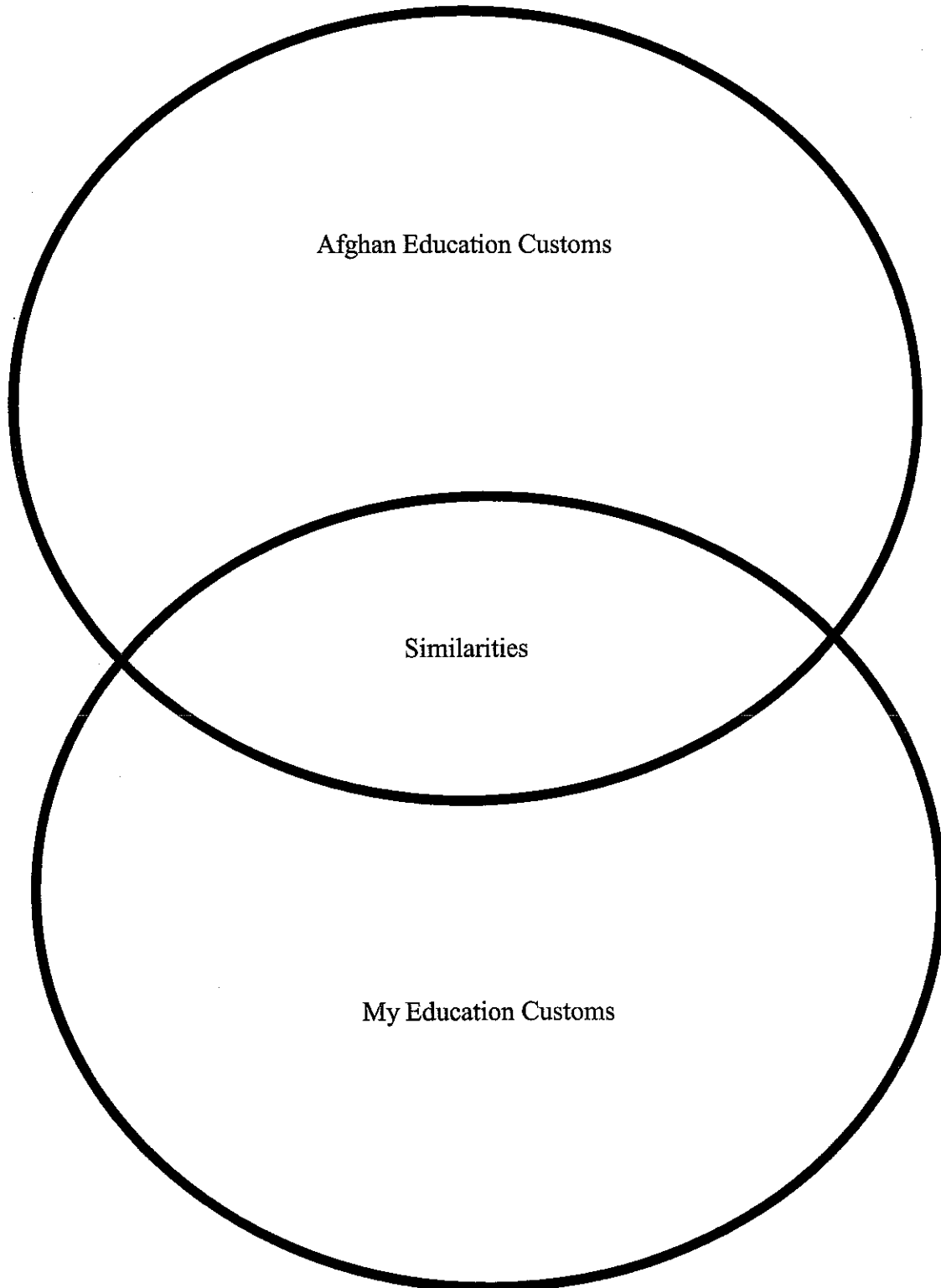
Courtship Customs

In the Venn diagram, write in observations and quotations (with page numbers) illustrating the customs and behaviors associated with a culture's rituals. If there are similarities in aspects of the cultures, write what you notice in the intersecting section.



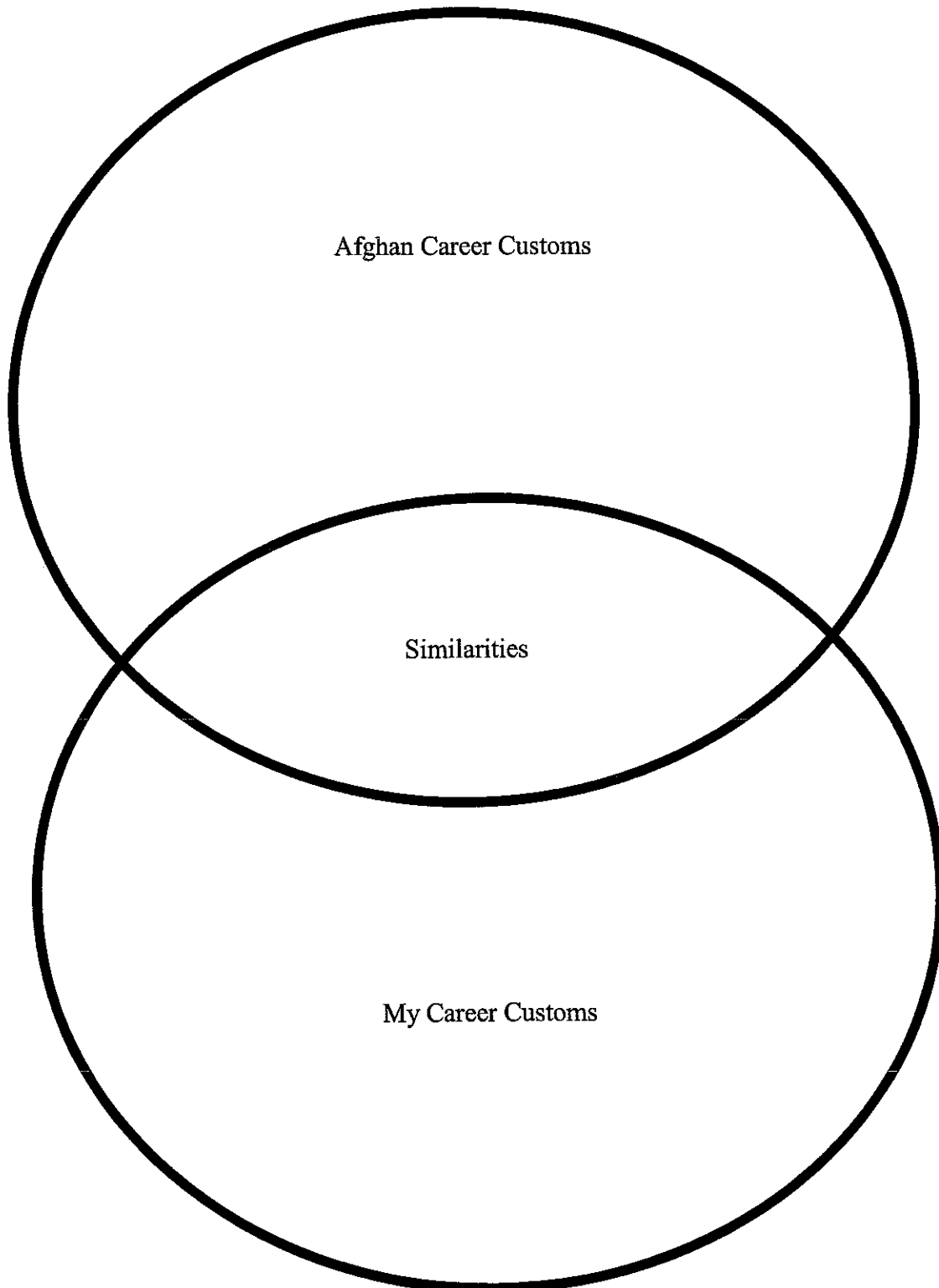
Education Customs

In the Venn diagram, write in observations and quotations (with page numbers) illustrating the customs and behaviors associated with a culture's educational philosophy. If there are similarities in aspects of the cultures, write what you notice in the intersecting section.



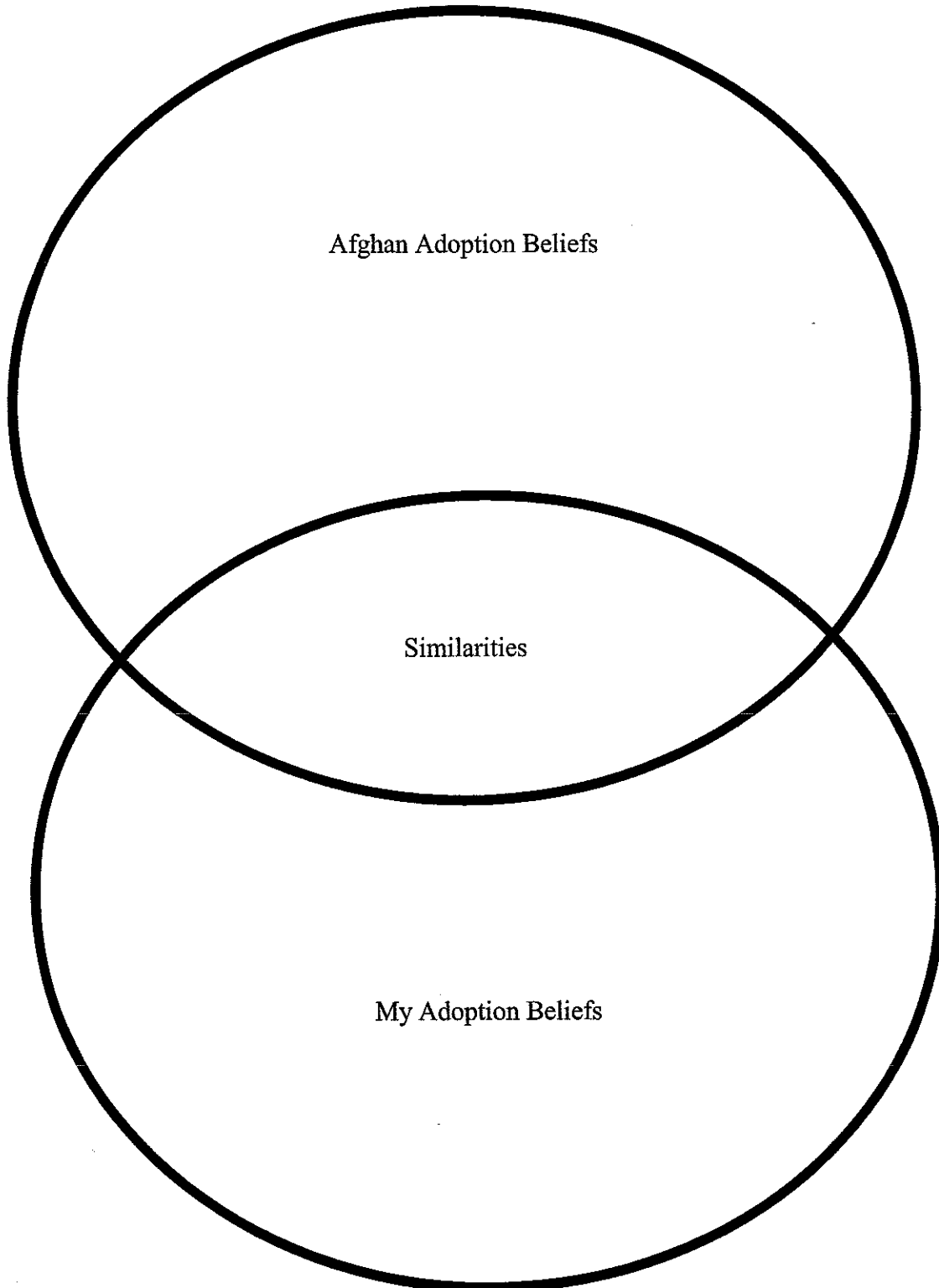
Career Customs

In the Venn diagram, write in observations and quotations (with page numbers) illustrating the customs and behaviors associated with a culture's career/employment philosophies. If there are similarities in aspects of the cultures, write what you notice in the intersecting section.



Adoption Customs/Beliefs

In the Venn diagram, write in observations and quotations (with page numbers) illustrating the customs and behaviors associated with a culture's attitude regarding adoption. If there are similarities in aspects of the cultures, write what you notice in the intersecting section.



Socratic Seminar #2: Chapters 13 – 17

Customs and Culture

Rationale: The focus of this Socratic Seminar is to describe and compare and contrast aspects of Afghani culture with students' own culture. Students will learn about aspects of Afghan culture as well as the different cultures represented in the classroom through close readings of fiction, active discussion, and careful listening. There are several writing opportunities pre- and post- seminar.

Preparation:

1. See the Guidelines for the Socratic Seminar in the *Reading and Writing Strategies for Academic Literacy and CIM Implementation for Portland Public Schools*.
2. Prior to the Socratic Seminar (as homework from the previous day), the participants should complete the attached **Comparative Customs: Afghan or Mine?** Curriculum.
3. Prior to the Socratic Seminar (possibly at the beginning of class if a block class), students should write on index cards three things they are wondering about based on the **Comparative Customs** chart. These cards should be given to the facilitator/s prior to the seminar.
4. Remember, the goal is for students to engage in dialogue, not debate—using the text to support their observations, maintaining an open mind, building on each other's ideas, sharing air time, and speaking to each other. Post these as norms and debrief the seminar within light of the norms.

Optional guiding questions (one prompt may be all that is required):

- Students share and dialogue about their **Comparative Customs** chart to establish what is happening in the book.
- Select specific quotes from the text to discuss that through the lens of individual behaviors and the larger society:
 - Page 146-147 (read the last paragraph on page 146 and the first paragraph on 147)
 - What is the "Afghan double standard"? Who benefits? What are double standards in other cultures?
 - Page 178 "Every woman needed a husband. Even if he did silence the song in her."
 - What does this mean? What does *the song* represent? How could this change? What would happen to the husbands if this change? What would happen to the men? Who perpetuates this condition of dependency?
 - Page 182 "Successful," Soraya hissed. "At least I'm not like him, sitting around while other people fight the *Shorawi* [Russians], waiting for when the dust settles so he can move in a reclaim his post little government position. Teaching may not pay much, but it's what I want to do! It's what I love, and it's a whole lot better than collecting welfare, but the way."
 - What does this say about women and careers? Which careers are respected? Is this different in the US?
 - How does Soraya's actions about teaching differ from Amir's? Why?

- Page 188 “Now if you were American, it wouldn’t matter. People here marry for love, family name and ancestry never even come into the equation. They adopt that way too, as long as the baby is healthy, everyone is happy. But we are Afghans . . .”
 - Is this an accurate view of American’s attitude regarding adoption? Why do some people think that “blood is thicker than water”? Why don’t others think it matters? What is intrinsically valuable in a relationship?

Rubaiyat Poetry

Rubai - rubaiyat in the plural - is the Persian word for quatrain, or four-line verse. In English translation, the standard form for rubaiyat is that the first, second, and last lines rhyme. The third line usually does not rhyme with the other three. The rubai is an ancient literary form the Persian poets have used to express their thoughts on diverse subjects. Because a rubai is so short and its rhyme scheme so restrictive, it often makes use of metaphor or imagery to express its meaning.

** Here are some examples...*

Rubaiyat by Omar Khayyam (Translated by Edward FitzGerald)

As you read, write about the symbols, themes and metaphors that come to mind. What patterns emerge? Images that unfold? Make notes on the other side of the page...

7

Come, fill the Cup, and in the fire of Spring
Your Winter-garment of Repentance fling:
The Bird of Time has but a little way
To flutter – and the Bird is on the Wing.

13

Some for the Glories of This World; and some
Sigh for the Prophet's Paradise to come;
Ah, take the Cash, and let the Credit go,
Nor heed the rumble of a distant Drum!

28

With them the seed of Wisdom did I sow,
And with mine own hand wrought to make it grow;
And this was all the Harvest that I reaped-
"I came like Water, and like Wind I go."

71

The Moving Finger writes; and, having writ,
Moves on: nor all your Piety nor Wit
Shall lure it back to cancel half a Line,

Nor all your Tears wash out a Word of it.

Procedure:

Discuss what you wrote in a small group. Share thoughts and insight. Report out to the large group.

Now write your own poem, using this poetry form. Make a connection to the novel in your poem. Your poem could revolve around a motif, a theme, or a metaphor. It could also represent some imagery from the story such as wind or winter.

Kite Making Activity

Rationale

As the title implies, one of the main recurrent motifs of the novel Kite Runner, by Khaled Hosseini, is a kite. As a way of connecting students with the text, it may be helpful to have individual students take the time to construct a personally decorated kite of their own. Class can then go outside and try to fly their creations.

One of the first things they will probably notice is how difficult it is to fly a kite, let alone maneuver a kite in the manner in which the characters of the novel are able to do. The following instructions are a basic recipe for making a kite. Students should be encouraged to make their own designs and features and see if they can fly.

Procedures (Adapted from a web page created by Jen Chan: Jen's Skcratch Pad.)

Collect all of the following material and distribute to students. Allow at least one whole class period for this task.

Make Your Own Kite!

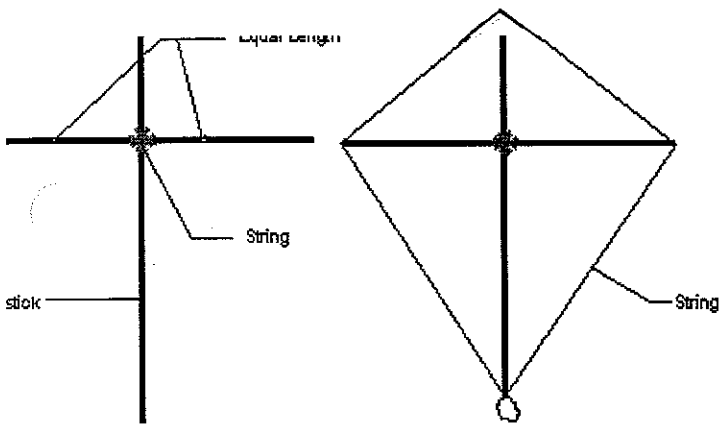
Have ever wanted to build a kite?

Well just follow these instructions and run with it!

A kite consists of these basic parts:

- **The Spine.** The vertical stick that you build your kite around.
- **The Spar.** The support stick(s) that are placed crossways or at a slant over the spine. Sometimes they are curved or bowed.
- **The Frame.** The joined spine and spars, usually with a string connecting their ends, that create the shape of the kite and make a support for the cover.
- **The Cover.** The paper, plastic, or cloth, that covers the frame to make a kite.
- **The Bridle.** One or more strings attached to the spine or spars, which help control the kite in the air.
- **The Flying Line.** The string running from the kites' bridle, where you hold to fly the kite. Usually very light weight, thin and strong string.
- **The Tail.** A long strip of paper or plastic or ribbon that helps to balance the kite in flight. Not all kites need tails.
- **The Reel.** The object you use to wind your flying line, to keep it from getting tangled or flying away.





DIAMOND KITE

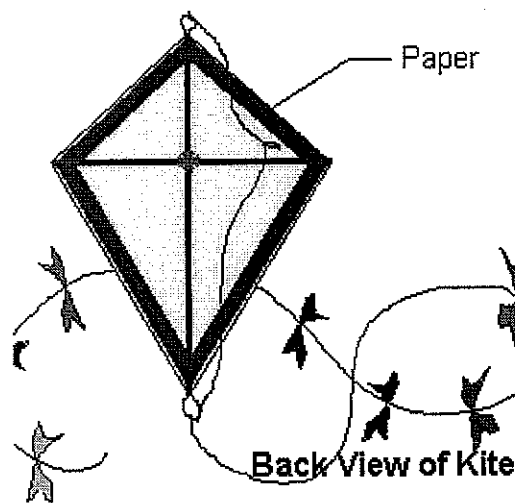
Materials:

- String, cord or thin garden twine
- Scotch tape or glue
- 1 sheet of strong paper (102cm x 102cm)
- 2 strong, straight wooden sticks of bamboo or wooden doweling 90cm and 102cm
- Colored markers, paint or crayons to decorate kite.

1. Make a cross with the two sticks, with the shorter stick placed horizontally across the longer stick. Make sure that both sides of the cross-piece is of equal width.

2. Tie the two sticks together with the string in such a way as to make sure that they are at right angles to each other. A good way to ensure that the joint is strong is to put a dab of glue to stick it in place.

3. Cut a notch at each end of both sticks. Make it deep enough for the type of string you are using to fit in to. Cut a piece of string long enough to stretch all around the kite frame. Make a loop in the top notch and fasten it by wrapping the string around the stick. Stretch the string through the notch at one end of the cross-piece, and make another loop at the bottom. Stretch the string through the notch at one end of the loop at the bottom. Stretch the string through the notch at the other end of the cross-piece. Finish by wrapping the string a few times around the top of the stick and cutting off what you don't need. This string frame must be taut, but not so tight as to warp the sticks.



4. Lay the sail material flat and place the stick frame face down on top. Cut around it, leaving about 2-3cm for a margin. Fold these edges over the string frame and tape or glue it down so that the material is tight.

5. Cut a piece of string about 122 cm long and tie one end to the loop at the other end of the string to the loop at the bottom. Tie another small loop in the string just above the intersection of the two cross pieces. This will be the kite's bridle, the string to which the flying line is attached.

6. Make a tail by tying a small ribbon roughly every 10cm along the length of string. Attach the tail to the loop at the bottom of the kite.

7. Decorate!

Tips:

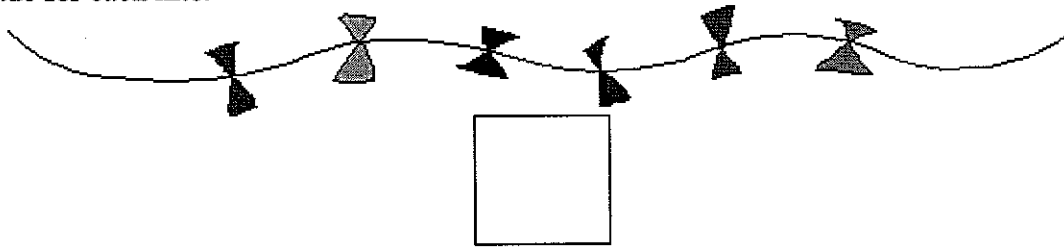
A properly located pivot point is generally located slightly ahead of the centre of gravity.

Spray can glue is really good for patching up paper kites.

Stability is improved by the use of an effective bow and a flexible tail.

Hold your kite up by the string when you are finished to see if it is balanced. You can balance it by putting more paper on one side.

Kites are different each time you construct one, so slight adjustments might need to be made for each kite.



Reflection:

Once students have had the opportunity to construct and then fly their kites, a simple one-page reflection about the experience would serve to integrate real life with the characters of the novel. Kite flying is a skill that takes a lot of time and effort to develop and competing is even more difficult. Amir and Hassan in The Kite Runner; the kite flyer and the kite runner, each possess specific skills. These metaphors can go a long way in leading to an understanding of the characters of the novel. It is often through empathy that we come to understand the world around us in a more beneficial manner.

Socratic Seminar #3: Chapters 18-25

Atonement: From the Personal to the Political

Rationale: The novel begins by issuing a kind of challenge – Rahim Khan’s promise to Amir that there is a way to be good again; to recover from his double betrayal of his best friend and half-brother, Hassan, and morally rehabilitate himself. The same question operating at the personal level applies in this book at the social one – how can a society become good again? If the Afghanistan of the early part of the book is peaceful and nurturing for privileged children such as Amir, we have ample opportunities to discern the society’s shortcomings. We know that Hassan, for example, was born to be illiterate. Or that Jamila Teheri believes “Every woman needed a husband, even if he did silence the song in her.” (p. 178) At the conclusion of this novel, a natural question to ask is: has Rahim’s promise been redeemed, at either the personal or societal level? What are Amir’s prospects for being good again? Or Afghanistan’s? Or any of us?

Preparation:

1. See the Guidelines for the Socratic Seminar in the *Reading and Writing Strategies for Academic Literacy and CIM Implementation for Portland Public Schools*.
2. Prior to the Socratic Seminar (possibly at the beginning of class if a block class), students should read the attached text, “Rebuilding the Bamiyan Buddhas.”
3. Remember, the goal is for students to engage in dialogue, not debate – using the text to support their observations, maintaining an open mind, building on each others’ ideas, sharing air time, and speaking to each other. Post these as norms and debrief the seminar in light of the norms.

Optional guiding questions (one prompt may be all that is required):

Rahim writes to Amir, “...And that, I believe, is what true redemption is, Amir jan, when guilt leads to good.” Pg 304

What are the limits of redemption? How much can you undo?

“Closing Sohrab’s door, I wondered if that was how forgiveness budded, not with the fanfare of epiphany, but with pain gathering its things, packing up and slipping away unannounced in the middle of the night.” Pg 360 Here Amir is talking about not feeling upset at the thought that Baba regarded Hassan as his true son, not Amir.

Does time heal all wounds? Or simply leave us all crippled?

Rebuilding the Bamiyan
Buddhas

**The new Afghan
government hopes to
restore the
archeological treasures
destroyed by the
Taliban**

Then and now: A gap in a cliff is all that remains of the Bamiyan Buddhas--shown here in a 1997 file photo--after the Taliban demolished the celebrated statues last March

By Babak Dehghanpisheh

Newsweek Web Exclusive

Updated: 6:39 a.m. ET Dec.31, 2001

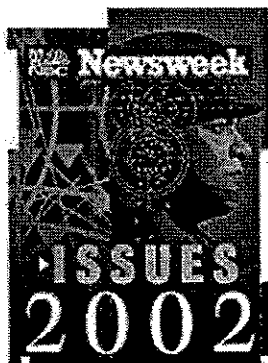
Dec. 31 - According to Buddhist belief, the human incarnation of Buddha gathered a group of 500 monks around him in 543 BC to bid them farewell. He asked the gathering three times whether there were any doubts about his teachings. No one answered. He left this final message: "All things change. Nothing is permanent. Work hard to reach salvation." In post-Taliban Afghanistan, those words now have a strange new resonance.

NINE MONTHS AFTER Afghanistan's fundamentalist rulers caused a global outcry by demolishing the renowned 5th-century Buddhas of the Bamiyan valley, their successors are planning to rebuild their country's greatest archaeological treasure. At the same time, new details about the destruction of the giant statues are emerging from local residents who witnessed the event.

The Taliban's plan to destroy the statues was carefully detailed, they say. The regime commissioned Arab, Sudanese and Bangladeshi demolition experts, as well as Chechen sappers, to do the job. Local residents of Bamiyan—Shiite Hazaras persecuted by and fiercely resistant to the Taliban—were forcibly evacuated ahead of the March destruction. The Taliban, they say, gave them a simple choice: become a Sunni Muslim or leave. Many fled to the nearby mountains.

Nine months after Afghanistan's fundamentalist rulers caused a global outcry by demolishing the renowned 5th-century Buddhas of the Bamiyan valley, their successors are planning to rebuild their country's greatest archaeological treasure.

Taliban Northern Alliance faction in Bamiyan, reported heavy radio traffic, mostly congratulatory messages, between Taliban soldiers in the days following the explosions. Fifty cows were sacrificed at the site and Taliban dignitaries were flown in by helicopter for the celebration.



The idea of destroying the Buddhas was so repugnant to most Afghans that even the Taliban's regional culture minister even disobeyed the order to participate. Some locals who did stay were forced into grunt labor during the two-week scheme. "People couldn't resist the Taliban," says Nowruz, 25. For three days, Nowruz was forced to dig, alternately using his hands or a pick, in order to pack explosives around the 114-foot Buddha—the smaller of the two statues flattened by the Taliban. He still bears scars on his knuckles from the digging and a scar on his knee where rock fragments hit him after an explosion.

Nowruz is now one of hundreds of refugees living in the caves carved out of the cliffs alongside the Buddhas. Those caves were once inhabited by thousands of monks who had come on pilgrimages to see the famous statues. During the sixth and seventh centuries AD, the monks—many from China and India—would gather to hear sermons amplified through the nostrils of the larger 165-foot statue.

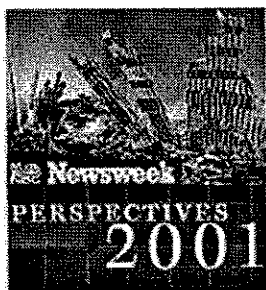
When the Taliban destroyed the statues last March, residents hiding in the mountains at the time say they heard explosions for three or four days. Members of Hizb-e-Wahdat, the anti-

The Pakistan-based Al-Rasheed Trust, thought to have links to Osama bin Laden, even printed a memorial calendar detailing the destruction. Today, all that's left of the Bamiyan Buddhas is rubble. And even the rubble isn't left to rest in peace. Bits of rock from the statues, which were not included on the list of UNESCO's World Heritage Sites because of the chaos within Afghanistan, have been smuggled out to Pakistani art dealers and made their way as far as Japan. "When the Bamiyan Buddhas were destroyed, it felt like Afghanistan lost a child,"

says Deputy Culture Minister Mirheydar Motaher.

But, like the cycle of birth and death fundamental to Buddhist thought, the statues may be getting a chance at reincarnation. Culture Minister Raheen Makhdoom officially announced plans for the reconstruction of the Buddhas yesterday. "The world should set an example to show extremists that today there are possibilities to reconstruct, and there is the will to reconstruct, such edifices after they are destroyed," Paul Bucherer-Dietschi, UNESCO's representative in the reconstruction effort, told NEWSWEEK during a survey mission of the Buddha site last week. A conference is tentatively scheduled for next May to hammer out the details.

Historical purists may disagree with the idea of reconstruction, but, for the moment, dissenting voices are getting drowned out by the lure of tourist dollars. "Reconstruction won't have the same historical value," says Motaher. "But it's a positive step for the country and could bring thousands of tourists." The reconstruction plan, if approved, will begin with the sale of 20-inch replicas of the Buddhas to collect funds. A scale model one-tenth of the actual size will then be constructed to work through technical difficulties. For example, designers will have to figure out how to stand the larger Buddha on two legs, since its own were missing for centuries. The final reconstruction will use the most accurate measurements of the Buddhas available, with less than a one-inch margin of error, taken by an Austrian mountaineer over thirty years ago.



Afghanistan's new authorities also hope to reinstate some of their country's other cultural artifacts. The Kabul Museum, a dark and dusty shell littered with statue rubble, lost approximately 2,750 works of art during Taliban rule. But hundreds more survived, smuggled out to Switzerland by members of the Northern Alliance and more moderate Taliban supporters. Bucherer-Dietschi, who opened the Afghanistan Museum in Bubendorf, Switzerland, a year ago, hopes the items will soon be sent back to Kabul for display at a new museum location.

Like almost everything else in Afghanistan, cultural revitalization will depend on cash. For the Buddhas of Bamiyan, there is no scarcity of donors. Japan, China and other countries with large Buddhist populations have offered their help, but this raises thorny religious issues. "The Buddhas must be rebuilt for their historical, not religious, value," says Motaher.

Other Afghans hold similar views. "The Taliban did a very bad thing destroying the Buddhas," says Sadeq, a 24-year old Bamiyan merchant whose general goods store looks out on the empty niches where the Buddhas once stood. "They thought people worshipped them. But it wasn't a holy site, it was a historic site."

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Interior Monologue Slot Machine Activity

Rationale: To have students create a monologue in the voice of one of the characters in the novel, The Kite Runner. In this novel, characters do not always voice their true feelings due to customs and social constraints. Having students imagine what characters might have said to one another will foster a deeper understanding of themes, people, and events in the novel.

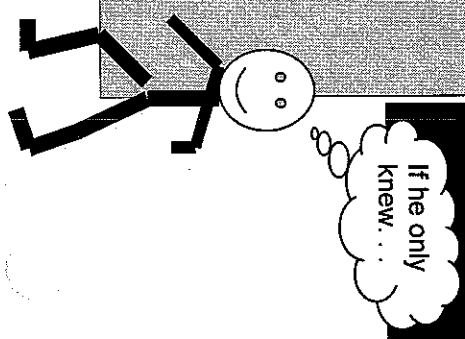
Procedure: Select/circle an element for each column of the slot machine to lay the foundation for an interior monologue you imagine could have occurred. Students write 1-2 page monologue based on their charts. Students may share these in small groups.

Optional activity: Create a CIM imaginative essay or rehearsed CIM speech based on your interior monologue.

Interior Monologue Slot Machine

| Characters | Setting | Purpose | Audience | Topics/Events |
|---|---|--|--|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ali • Hassan • Rahim Khan • Amir • Baba • Sanubar • Soraya • Farid • Assef • Sohrab • Farzana • An Afghani refugee on the same truck that Amir and Baba took. • A servant in Baba's house | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ After death ❖ After violence ❖ At a wedding ❖ After the Taliban takes over the government ❖ During the Russian War ❖ In America ❖ Ten years after the story has ended ❖ At the stadium ❖ After the last kite competition ❖ A pleasant moment ❖ In Pakistan ❖ Running away ❖ Coming home | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➢ Explain who is responsible for an event or action ➢ Justify an action ➢ Express regret ➢ Take responsibility ➢ Express their inner feelings ➢ Express their true feelings about someone else ➢ Condemn someone ➢ Make a plan for the future ➢ Put a plan in action/make something happen | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Another character ▪ A student at your school ▪ A reporter ▪ A psychologist ▪ Him or herself ▪ other | <p>List scenes from <i>The Kite Runner</i></p> <p>1. _____</p> <p>2. _____</p> <p>3. _____</p> |

An interior monologue is what is thought and felt by a character, but remains unsaid. This is your chance to give voice to a character from the story. Select/circle an element from each column of the slot machine to lay the foundation for an interior monologue you imagine *could have occurred*.



Silent Discussion

A Culminating Activity for *The Kite Runner*

Overview: Students will share and express their final answers to some of the essential questions in this unit. By doing this discussion silently, each student will be able to engage in a dialogue while quietly developing his or her own opinion.

Materials needed: Six large pieces of chart or butcher paper. Write one of the following statements on each piece of paper. Underneath each statement, draw a vertical line dividing the paper into two sides. Label the side on the left "Agree" and the side on the right "Disagree". Post the papers in different spots around the room. Provide each student with a marker.

- Moral failure can make you a better person.
- The U.S. invasion of Afghanistan was justified.
- It is not possible to truly know someone else.
- Honor and pride are poor foundations for a society.
- Every woman needs a husband.
- Women in this society should dress less provocatively.

Procedure:

1. Students travel silently around the room, choosing three or four of the issues to respond to. They then write responses silently.
2. Finally, students silently read other responses to the questions and respond in writing to two or three of them.
3. When the silent response time is complete, time can be used to read the responses out loud, to elaborate orally on any of the issues that cannot remain silenced and/or evaluate the experience.

Suggestions:

- Set time limits for students to stay in one spot.
- Allow some time for first responses, perhaps as much as 15 minutes.
- Then allow more time for follow-up responses.
- Have students initial each comment/response
- Play an appropriate music selection during the silent part of the activity.

Literary Essay

A **literary essay** is a type of essay that explores the meaning and construction of a literary work. A literary essay focuses on and analyzes elements of literature such as: theme, character, setting, structure (motif), style, tone, rhetorical strategies, narrative techniques, and ideology. You are trying to discover why and how a literary work is constructed the way it is. *SIFC English Department 1997*

You will be relying on your dialogue journal, notes from the reading, group discussions, and class activities to help shape this essay. This is an interpretive essay, based on the interpretations you've discovered from the reading.

Assignment: Write a literary essay on the novel *The Kite Runner*, by Khaled Hosseini. Support your essay with examples from the text. Use your dialogue journal to help you see patterns that are

Assignment Details:

- Paper must be typed, 12 pt. Times font, double-spaced
- 3-5 pages long
- Completed check off list that has been initialed by instructors during the process
- Attach motif journal to the essay, although this will be checked throughout the novel study
- Properly cited quotes (see Quotes-Embedded/Blocked/Paraphrase)
- Annotated bibliography

Criteria: Attach this sheet to your essay.

_____ 1. *Thesis Statement: Stated or Implied. Write it in the space below. (Remember a thesis has 2 parts – a subject and an opinion. Example "The use of trees in this novel is a clever device for conveying character emotions.")*

A.

B.

C.

- _____ 2. *Introduction: What kind of introduction did you use?*
Question
Quotation
Anecdote
Wake up call
Other
- _____ 3. *Evidence: Prove your point with specific examples from the novel. On your essay; mark each of the following you used in a different color.*
Block quotes using the text for proof
Embedded quotes using the text for proof
Paraphrase of incidents, language, characterization, etc that prove your point
Analysis – Why this evidence proves your point
- _____ 4. *Transitions: Refer back to your thesis. Keep your essay moving.*
- _____ 5. *Conclusion: What kind of conclusion did you use?*
Summary
Circle back to the beginning
Possible solution
Restate and emphasize thesis
Further questions to think about
- _____ 6. *Tight Writing:*
Active Verbs
Lean Language
Metaphoric Language
Sentence Variety
- _____ 7. *Grammar, Punctuation, Spelling checked and corrected*
On the back of this page, describe what you need to do to revise this essay:

The Kite Flyer

CIM Essay Writing and Speaking Prompts

Expository Essay Choices:

- At the outset of the novel, Rahim Khan tells Amir that “there is a way to be good again.” What, in your opinion, turns out to be the road to redemption as the author lays out his thinking – not just for Amir, but for any individual who has experienced some kind of moral breakdown?
- What is the relationship between individual morality and the health of the greater society, as Hosseini seems to be suggesting in this novel? What must a society do “to be good again?”
- Amir says of the incredibly loyal Hassan on pg 55: “That’s the thing about people who mean everything they say. They think everyone else does too.” To what degree are the interactions of characters in this novel constrained by their very different moral codes? Who sees “the other” accurately in this novel? What is the key to that accurate seeing?
- “You’ve always been a tourist here, you just didn’t know it,” Farid tells Amir on p. 232 in rejecting his homeland. To what nation and culture does Amir most comfortably belong, Afghanistan or the United States? Be sure and cite reasons and evidence for your position.

Narrative Essay Choices:

- “Hassan couldn’t read a first grade textbook but he’d read me plenty.” P. 61. Describe a time when you felt yourself stripped bare by the intuitive perceptions of a friend or relative who saw through your exterior pose to identify what was really on your mind.
- Tell a story about a favorite childhood pastime – whatever took the place of kite-flying in your upbringing. What lessons did you learn from it that still shape your adult world view and values?
- Some argue that humans are incapable of forgiving each other and that’s what a God is for. Describe a personal experience you have had with the process of attempting to forgive someone, or of being forgiven.

Unrehearsed Informative Speech:

- Identify and explain one or two values of Pashtunwali as they are illustrated in this story.
- What are the frustrations of the immigrant to the United States as experienced by Baba in this story?

- Introduce your audience to the character of Mullah Nasruddin and explain why he is such a beloved part of Afghan culture.

Topics for a Persuasive Essay or Speech

- Resolved: that marriages should be arranged through elders in the respective families rather than established through romantic attraction of the partners, themselves.
- Resolved: that all American military forces should exit Afghanistan, forthwith.
- Resolved: that confession is good for the soul.

Amir-(Main character/narrator)A 12 year old Afghan boy from wealth and considerable influence. He deals with the moral struggle of betrayal and trust throughout the novel. He tries very hard to win his father's love and attention as a young boy and makes moral sacrifices to do this. Teased Hassan even though they were close, but Hassan is a servant and Amir hesitates to call him a friend.

Baba-(father of Amir)"One of the richest merchants in Kabul." Powerful and influential. He is a businessman and owns one of the most beautiful mansions in Kabul. He is aloof towards his son and largely disappointed in him since he doesn't feel he stands up for himself. Later in the novel, the reader discovers that he is also the father of Hassan, the servant boy. Baba tells Amir as a child that stealing is the worst of all sins.

Hassan-(servant boy to Amir and Baba) He lives with his father, or the man we think is his father, Ali, in a mud hut in the garden of Baba's mansion. He and Amir play together as children, but Amir ultimately betrays Hassan so that he and his father will leave. Amir will not have to suffer the guilt of not helping Hassan when he was being raped by some of the neighbor boys who are evil to him largely because he is Hazara and they are Pashtun.

Ali-(servant to Baba and Amir) Ali and Baba grew up together. There are many similarities between the relationship between Ali and Baba, Hassan and Amir.

Rahim Khan-(close friend of Baba) He becomes Amir's mentor and keeps Baba's secrets. Amir thinks of him as an uncle.

Assef-(neighbor boy) He and the other neighbor boys persecute Hassan because he is a Hazara. Amir gets in the way of this and ends up being bullied by them as well.

Sofia-(Baba's wife/Amir's mother) She dies in childbirth with Amir, so he never gets to know her. He has a picture of her, but his father doesn't tell him much about her.

Sanuabar-(Hassan's mother) She is described as "a notoriously unscrupulous woman who lived up to her dishonorable reputation." She leaves less than a week after Hassan is born, running off with a clan of traveling singers and dancers.

Sohrab-(Hassan's son)

Farzana-(Hassan's wife)

Soraya-(Amir's wife)

General Taheri and Jamila Taheri-(Soraya's parents)

Afghanistan Timeline -- BCE to 1919

Afghanistan is an ancient land with archeological evidence of human habitation dating back to the stone age, 20-50,000 BCE. At various times over the millennia, empires that represented the acme of the civilized world have been centered there. Alexander the Great conquered this land – and was plagued by constant, bitter tribal revolts. More than a thousand years later, Tamurlane had much the same experience. As did the British in the 19th century. A brief timeline of some of the high points of the various civilizations that have held sway over this Central Asian crossroads follows: (BCE stands for “Before the Common Era, and corresponds to the period before the birth of Christ).

2000-1500 BCE – Aryan tribes from modern day India take over the area. The City of Kabul is established.

600 BCE – Zoroaster propounds a new monotheistic religion in Balkh. (The ruins of Balkh lie in modern day Northwestern Afghanistan.) Religious scholars regard Zoroastrianism as an important precursor of Christianity.

522-486 BCE – Most of Afghanistan is under control of Persia and the Achaemenid ruler, Darius the Great.

329-326 BCE – Alexander the Great takes over ushering in a period of Greek rule.

50 AD – Kushan rule under King Kanishka. The art of this period is a fascinating fusion of Greek and Buddhist ideals of beauty and is known as the Gandharan period.

400 AD – Invasion of the White Huns and the systematic sacking and destruction of most of the country's wealth.

652 AD – Arabs introduce Islam.

962-1030 AD – Ghaznavid Dynasty, centered in modern Ghazni, Afghanistan becomes the center of Islamic power and civilization with such geniuses as the scientist and philosopher Ibn Sina.

1219 AD – Invasion of Afghanistan by Genghis Khan who destroys the irrigation systems, turning fertile soils into permanent deserts.

1273 AD – Marco polo crosses Afghanistan on his way to China.

1370-1404 – Tamerlane rules the known world from his capital in modern day Herat.

1504-1519 – Babur, founder of the Moghul dynasty in India, takes control of Kabul.

1613-1689 – Khushal Khan Khattak, the Afghan warrior-poet, initiates a national uprising against the Moghul government.

1708 – Mir Wais leads Kandahar to independence from Safavid Persian rule.

1839-1842 – First Anglo-Afghan War ends with the rout of a British garrison from Kabul. Of 16,500 soldiers and 12,000 dependents, only a handful reach Jalalabad alive.

1859 – British take Baluchistan, to the south, and Afghanistan becomes completely landlocked.

1873-1893 – The Great Game. Empires of Russia and England vie for control of the central Asian massif with Afghanistan as the probing battle ground for many of these confrontations. The situation is “resolved” with the establishment of the Durand line by the British fixes borders of Afghanistan with British India and, incidentally, splits Afghan tribal areas, leaving many Afghans in what is now Pakistan.

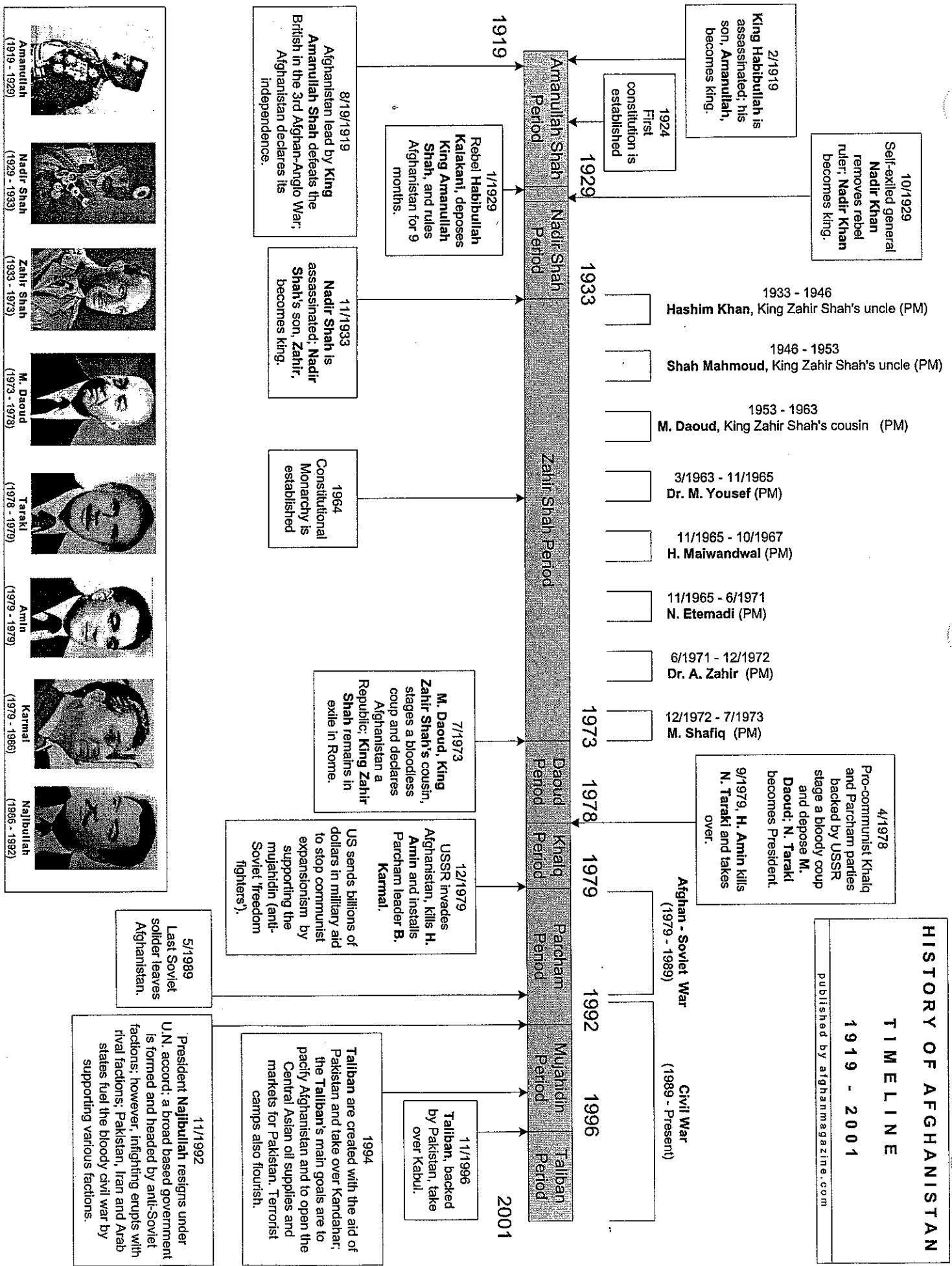
The seeds are thereby sewn for another hundred years of unrest and confrontation.

HISTORY OF AFGHANISTAN

TIME LINE

1919 - 2001

Published by afgnamagazine.com



The Kite Runner

Glossary

Most Farsi or Pashtun language words used in The Kite Runner are immediately explained or paraphrased so not every term that occurs in the book has been defined here. In general, this glossary contains terms that occur repeatedly or that are essential background information for understanding the novel.

Agha – Sir, placed after the name. A polite form of address as in “Hassan Agha.” Or by itself to a stranger.

Baba – Daddy. A friendly or intimate way of saying “father.”

Bacha -- boy

Baksheesh – A gift, especially in the sense of a gratuity or tip. To be Bakshida is to be forgiven for some trespass.

Bas – Enough, as in, “enough already, stop it.”

Eid – Any of several holidays, but especially the three days of celebration after the month of Ramadan.

Hazaras – One of several minority groups in Afghanistan. Hazaras are generally Mongoloid or somewhat Chinese in appearance. They arrived in Afghanistan along with Genghis Khan and the thundering horde off the Central Asian steppe in the 13th Century. Their homeland in Afghanistan is mainly in the mountainous central area of the country around the picture post-card beautiful lake area of Bamyan. Hazaras generally have low-paying, physically-taxing jobs when they come to the city.

Inshallah – God willing. A very common expression in Afghanistan, reflecting the belief that the future is under God’s control, not man’s.

Jan – Dear. Usually attached to the end of a name, as in ‘Khala Jan’, Dear Auntie.

[Several kinds of common Afghan foods are referenced in the course of this novel. These include **nan**, an oven-baked flat bread; **kabob**, meat on a skewer; **kofta**, meatballs (usually from sheep, camel or goat); **kolcha**, cookies; **qurma**, a fried rice and yogurt dish, usually served with bits of chicken; **shirini**, any kind of sweets or candy;]

Hadj – Once in one’s life, the faithful Muslim is expected to make the pilgrimage to Mecca also known as the hadj. A person who has done so is addressed as “Hadj Sahib, one who has made the pilgrimage. It is customary (and flattering) to address an older person this way.

Kaka – uncle

Kamyab or Nahkam? – Succeeded or failed? Made it or came up short? Happy or sad?

Khastagar – a suitor. Young men have the right to court young women only after the parents of the respective families have given their consent. To flirt with one another outside the context of this permission is socially inappropriate.

Khanum – woman or wife.

Khoda Hafez – Goodbye. God keep you safe.

Mehman -- a party

Mardum --- man. Leading to the expression in the novel, 'mard to mard' or man to man

Mast – drunk. Good Muslims do not drink "sherob," any alcoholic beverage, including wine.

Mashallah -- Nice going. Congratulations.

Mord -- dead

Namaz – prayer. A "joi-namaz" is a prayer rug. Good Muslims answer the call to prayer five times a day. The custom calls for ritual ablutions before prayer, followed by facing the prayer rug toward Mecca and saying the prayers in that direction.

Nang and Namos – Honor and pride. Two virtues admired under the code of Pashtunwali. These qualities reflect on the social standing of the family, especially when it comes to the chastity of a wife or daughter.

Pashtun – The dominant minority group in Afghanistan. Pashtuns look generally Aryan in appearance, are big strapping folks and are bound by the honor code of Pushtun-Wali which includes ideas such as gracious hospitality toward the guest, independence and eye-for-an-eye justice. For the most part, Afghanistan's rulers have come from the Pashtun ethnic group.

Pirhan and Tumban – the traditional dress of the average Afghan, a cotton shirt (resembling a nightshirt that comes down to the knees) which is the pirhan and gathered pants (tumban) of the same material. The more material in the pants, the better.

Rafiq – Literally, this means "friend." During the Soviet occupation, however, the term 'rafiq' meant more like 'comrade' – fellow members of the communist party, especially those who informed against neighbors to the government.

Ramadan -- The month of fasting in which good Muslims do not eat food or drink during daylight hours. A main rationale for keeping the fast is so that the faithful can experience how the poor feel during the rest of the year.

Salaam Alaykum -- Hello. Peace be with you.

Shabas -- Excellent! Well done!

Shari'a -- Religious law as the basis for the conduct of civil society. Fundamentalists interpret the Quran in a very restrictive way to impose a Puritanical vision on people -- for example, requiring that women be clothed from head to foot and accompanied by a male relative when leaving the home

Shorawi -- Literally this term means 'the Northerners.' The Russians.

Sunni -- One of two major divisions of Islam. The Sunni branch of the faith is considered the more "establishment" branch and corresponds to the religion as practiced in Saudi Arabia. In Afghanistan, the dominant minority group of Pashtuns are Sunnis.

Shia - A division of Islam, constituting about 15% of the religion. Shiites recognize the line of succession of the prophet Ali, the son-in-law and cousin of Muhammad. Ali was bloodily betrayed and, not coincidentally, Shiites tend to think of themselves as a similarly persecuted and ill-used minority. In Afghanistan, the Hazaras are Shiite adherents.

Tabla -- Drums

Tashakor -- Thank you.

Watan -- the homeland, a Pashtun term.

Yateem -- without family, orphaned

Zakat -- Religious duty in Islam, especially the obligation to contribute part of your income to the poor.

Zindagi Migzara -- Life goes on

AFGHAN COMMUNICATOR
VOICE OF THE YOUNG GENERATION

Kala Shoorwa

By Zahera Saed
July-Sept. 1998
Lemar-Aftaab

"I don't eat *kala* for the taste, but for what it makes me, more Afghan!" so proclaimed my cousin in Kabul Restaurant and leaned back in his chair, daring me to order something more Afghan than him. I stirred my straw in my coke, after declining his suggestion to order *doogh*, and ordered *muntoo* with a layer of yogurt and *keema* -- enough meat to ensure that I was truly a descendent of great warriors, and curiously awaited his dish.

How would it be garnished? A flower behind the ear? Or would it be carefully chopped into neat, unrecognizable pieces to be eaten with knife and fork in a matter of half an hour?

We would get it fresh on Fridays from the *halal* meat store in Brighton Beach. Once I dared my little brother to touch its opaque eyes while it lay unwatched by my parents on the dining room table. When he refused, willing to be a coward when it came to lamb's eyes, i being the bully older sister, shoved his finger in anyway and it punctured through both bag and eye. Now, my brother is all grown up, but if he catches a hint that *kala* is simmering in the pot for dinner, he'll make up some excuse to miss dinner that night.

It only costs an extra two dollars at the *halal* meat store, whether it was goat or lamb. My father would always buy two heads. Then these small grinnng things would take three hours to clean and prepare. An initial twenty minutes was

required to soften whatever was inside the crevices and cavities. Then my mother would bang and shake the head into the sink to clean its nose, ears, brush its teeth, scrape layers off its tongue and boil it some more before finally flavoring it to give it its cheery look.

"This was my breakfast in my college years!" my father would boast over the dinner table, trying to get his kids to eat some of it. But, his nostalgia never moved us, his three macaroni and cheese, pizza and lasagne loving kids. In fact, we would turn all sour with suspicion, on guard in case a bit of tongue found its way over to our plate. After dinner, my mother would wrap the heads into three bags, so that the neighbors in our building wouldn't be frightened if they saw a grinning skull in the communal trash. She would throw it out herself because we were all too scared of it to take it from her like we usually did.

In twenty minutes, at the restaurant, a full head -- fleshy in all the right places was brought in by the waiter, with the soup in a separate dish. It wasn't neatly chopped up to make it a quick meal to stab and go. I think my cousin expected it to be chopped up for him by expert hands. I guess four years of living at a dorm with only frozen and canned foods is enough to crumble the foundation of traditional eating.

"Oh, its real head...okay...okay, it doesn't matter," he said while fumbling with his silverware, and using the fork to stab especially at the lamb's nostrils. When that proved futile, he tried separating the jaws to get at the tongue, but for some reason he couldn't pull it off. When he saw me staring at him with one eyebrow arched up, he said, "You know, forks and knives were never meant for our kind of food. I don't know why they brought it to our table..." he trailed off, engrossed in a method that would prove effective. Then

for a few minutes he gave up and just stared at the steam rising over the *kala*. He returned to the struggle with the *kala* for a bit of tongue, some scraps off its face, and the tips of its ears.

Zuhra Saed is a member of the Association of Afghan Writers (AAW).

comments

index

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Massacre in Afghanistan: Fleeing Civilians Fired Upon

Afghanistan's ruling Taliban militia massacred thousands of civilians, including nine Iranian diplomats and about 3,000 Hazaras - a Persian speaking Shi'a minority - when it seized the northern city of Mazar-i Sharif last August, human rights groups reported. The massacre brought Iran and Afghanistan to the verge of war and sent thousands of Afghan refugees fleeing into neighboring Pakistan and Tajikistan.

In November, Amnesty International (AI) and Human Rights Watch (HRW) released reports on the killings, documenting that among other atrocities Taliban soldiers chopped off women's and children's hands, slit men's throats, and shot anyone trying to flee the city. According to HRW, the Mazar-i Sharif massacre "represents one of the single worst examples of killings of civilians in Afghanistan's twenty-year war."

On August 8, Taliban militia captured Mazar-i Sharif in northwest Afghanistan, the only major city controlled by the United Front, the coalition opposing the Taliban. Within a few hours, Taliban troops launched indiscriminate attacks on civilians and combatants throughout the city. Witnesses described it as a "killing frenzy," HRW reported.

In the days following the attack, Taliban forces systematically went from house to house, searching for male members of the ethnic Hazara, Tajik, and Uzbek communities, presumably to keep them from mounting resistance to the Taliban. They summarily executed hundreds of Hazara men and boys. (They reportedly singled out Hazaras because they are Shi'aa religious group that Sunni Muslim Taliban consider infidels and because many Hazara helped to avert a Taliban takeover of Mazar-i Sharif in 1997.) The Taliban reportedly captured thousands of other men, detaining them first in Mazar-i Sharif, and then taking them to Taliban run detention camps in Shibberghan, Herat, Qandahar, and other cities.

Fleeing Civilians Detained, Attacked

Taliban officials set up checkpoints outside Mazar-i Sharif to intercept fleeing civilians. One witness described a "black line" of hundreds of people fleeing south on the main road out of the city. Another described "a solid line of people from Mazar to Tangi-Awlie" the area south of the city on the way to the mountains. At checkpoints, the Taliban stopped them and searched their vehicles and belongings. Taliban soldiers reportedly interrogated them with questions such as: "How many Taliban did you kill in Mazar?" and "Are you Hazaras?" The Taliban detained those deemed to be Hazaras.

For two days following the massacre, Taliban forces reportedly dropped hundreds of grenade-sized bombs from airplanes on the roads of fleeing refugees and launched rocket attacks that, in one incident, killed more than 50 people.

The capture of Mazar-i Sharif and several other towns resulted in a massing of Afghan refugees on the Afghan-Tajikistan border. Russia reinforced the border and condemned Pakistan for its military support of the Taliban. Pakistan denied such activity. CNN reported that the Tajik government "would allow the refugees to enter from Afghanistan, despite the risk of Taliban fighters crossing north with them."

The massacre also ignited tensions between Iran and Afghanistan when nine Iranian diplomats were murdered during the attack. Iran, which backs the anti-Taliban alliance, deployed 70,000 troops near the Afghan border and began military maneuvers.

Throughout November, the Taliban restricted UN access to the region, rejected UN appeals to allow a comprehensive international investigation into the massacre, and forced non-governmental relief organizations to withdraw non-emergency assistance.

According to HRW, refugees who survived the massacre, particularly those who reached Pakistan, remain at risk of reprisal from the Taliban. "Most, having lost everything in their flight from Mazar-i Sharif, face a bleak future and little assistance as refugees in Pakistan," the report said.

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